

Fisher's River
Primitive Baptist
Association



"Thy Word is a Lamp Unto My Feet."—Ps. 119: 105

ASHBURN

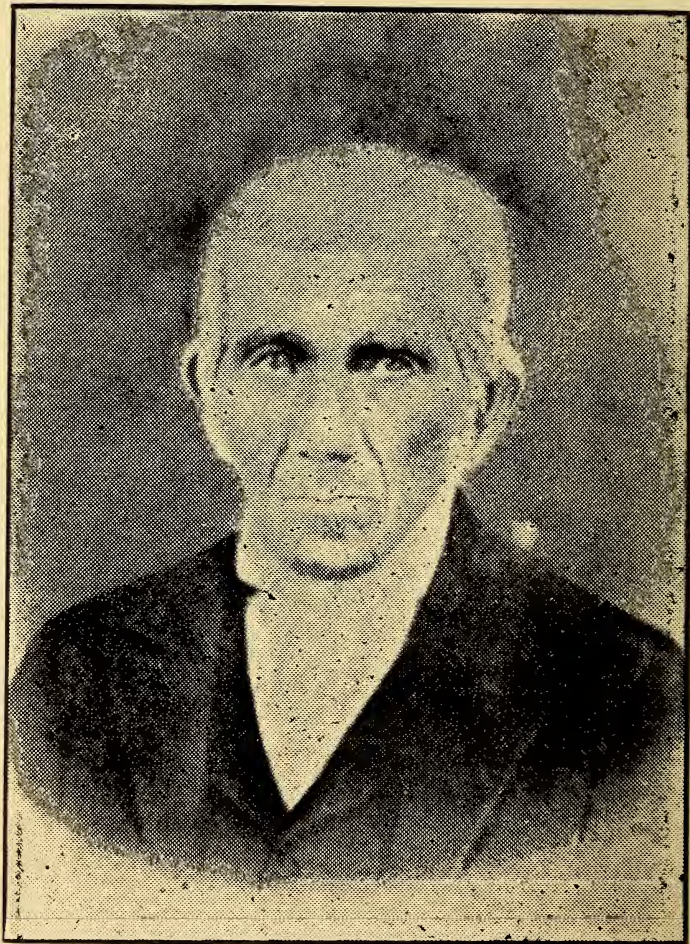


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ELDER JOHN JONES, (DECEASED) EARLY
MODERATOR OF FISHER'S RIVER
ASSOCIATION.

HISTORY
OF THE
FISHER'S RIVER
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION

FROM ITS
ORGANIZATION,
IN 1832,

TO
1904,

BY
JESSE A. ASHBURN.



Our motto:
Truth is that perfect word that
knows no deception.



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PREFACE.

The object of this work is to preserve a knowledge of the faith, customs, manner of worship &c. of the fathers. The author, seeing the growing tendency of the age to reduce the Christian religion to a mere science or carnal knowledge of the Scriptures, on the one hand, and to leave off Christian duties and trust in the doctrine of "Stoicism" on the other, felt constrained to leave on record the faith and practice of the fathers, believing them to be of that faith and that practice taught in the Scriptures; and, while it is true that the work of the fathers is not held as faultless, yet their simple and faithful manner of living and worship, their child-like faith, their self-sacrificing spirit and fervent devotions are worthy of emulation.

So, with this desire, this little book, imperfect and unattractive as it is, is sent forth to the reader, trusting in advance that the reader may be actuated by charity to overlook errors and weigh the intention.

THE AUTHOR.

THE ORGANIZATION.

The Fisher's River Primitive Baptist Association was organized on Friday before the third Sunday in November, 1832, at Cody's Creek meetinghouse, about eight or ten miles southwest of Dobson, N. C.

The following churches, to wit: Deep Creek, Fisher's River, State Road, Round Peak, Cody's Creek, Ararat, and Swan Creek, all sent delegates to a convention, which had been previously called for the purpose of organizing a new association. These delegates, after assembling, organized by electing Elder Joshua Carter moderator, and Silas Jones clerk. They adopted the name *Fisher's River Baptist Association*, and elected a committee, to wit: Pleasant Cockerham, John Jones, Henry Steele, Erasmus Canter, and Robert Welbourn to

frame a Constitution &c. The following Covenant, Articles of Faith, Constitution, and Rules of Decorum, with but little exception, were submitted and adopted.

COVENANT.

We do now in the presence of Almighty God, and in the faith of the gospel, and by the help of divine grace, unreservedly and unitedly give up ourselves to God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Ghost, to be for Him and no other; freely submitting ourselves to him, to be at his disposal for his glory, taking him as our true guide and only portion, promising by the help of divine grace to watch against sin, temptation, and corruption; and to hold a continual warfare with the same, looking to Christ who is the author and finisher of our faith, and the only hope and surety of his people. Under his covenant of grace, we do now freely and joyfully give our-

selves to one another by the will of God, freely **covenanting and engaging** to and with each other to bear one another's burdens in the gospel, and so fulfill the law of Christ unto obedience, promising to watch over **one another in love** and to hold communion together in the ordinances of the gospel, submitting ourselves in this, which we trust is a part of his mystical body, according as we shall be directed by his Spirit in his word; and by the help of divine grace to still pray for more light from the Lord, believing that he will further and more gloriously open to us his word and the mysteries of his kingdom,—and to our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, to whom be glory forever and forever. Amen.

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

ARTICLE I—OF GOD AND THE HOLY TRINITY.

We believe in one only true and living God, who rules all things af-

ter his own will; and that he, who created all things, is infinite in power, wisdom, knowledge and goodness; eternal, immortal, invisible and unchangeable; and that this God has revealed himself in his word under the character of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and that these three are one; and that there are three that bear witness in earth: the water, the spirit and the blood, and that these three agree in one.

ARTICLE II.—OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the written word of God, and are a sufficient rule of faith and practice; that they are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness; and that they contain all things necessary to be known for the salvation of men and women.

ARTICLE III.—OF THE ATONEMENT.

We believe that Christ died and made a complete atonement for all who ever did, does now, or ever will believe on his name; and that all who are finally saved were given to Christ in covenant of the Father before the world was, that they should show forth his praise.

ARTICLE IV.—OF FOREKNOWLEDGE, ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION.

We believe that [all] whom God did foreknow he did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; that God elected according to his foreknowledge, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, all who are finally saved, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for all true saints; and that none come to Christ only those whom he loved with an everlasting love, and in due time calls to

everlasting glory.

V. We believe in the doctrine of original sin.

VI. We believe in man's impotency to recover himself from the fallen state he is in by his own freewill and ability.

VII. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God only by the imputed righteousness of Christ.

VIII. We believe that God's elect will be called, converted, regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

IX. We believe the saints shall persevere in grace and never finally fall away.

X. We believe that baptism and the Lord's supper are ordinances of Jesus Christ, and that true believers are the only proper subjects of the ordinances, and that the true mode of baptism is by immersion.

XI. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and a general judgment.

XII. We believe the punishment

of the wicked will be eternal, and the joys of the righteous everlasting.

XIII. We believe that no minister has the right to administer the ordinances only such as are regularly called and have come under the imposition of the hands of the presbytery.

CONSTITUTION.

I. The association shall be composed of members chosen by the different churches in our union, and sent to represent them in the association, who shall be members best qualified for that purpose; and producing letters from their respective churches, certifying their appointment, shall be entitled to seats; but no church shall have more than three representatives in the association.

II. In the letters from the different churches shall be expressed their number in full fellowship, those baptized, received by letter, dismissed by letter, excommunicated and dead since the last association. These facts

are to be expressed only in the letters to the fall association.

III. The members thus chosen and received shall have no power to lord it over God's heritage, nor shall they use any ecclesiastical power over the churches, nor shall they infringe on any of the internal rights of the churches in the union.

IV. The association, when convened, shall be governed and ruled by a regular and proper decorum.

V. The association shall have a moderator and clerk, and who shall be chosen by the suffrage of the members present.

VI. New churches may be admitted into this association, who shall petition by letter and messengers: and upon examination, if found orthodox and orderly, shall be received by the association, and manifested by the moderator giving the messengers the right hand of fellowship.

VII. Every church in the union

shall be entitled to representation in the association.

VIII. Every query presented, by any member in the association, shall be received and answered according to the Scriptures.

IX. Every motion made and seconded shall be considered by the association, except it be withdrawn by him who made it.

X. There shall be an association book kept, wherein the proceedings of the association shall be recorded, by the clerk appointed by the association.

XI. The minutes of the association shall be read and corrected, if need be, and signed by the moderator and clerk before the association rises.

XII. Amendments to this plan or form of government may be made at any time when the association may think proper.

XIII. We hold no fellowship with any secret order.

XIV. The association shall have power, (1) To provide for the general union of the churches; (2) To preserve inviolable a chain of communion among the churches; (3) To give the churches all necessary advice in matters of difficulty; (4) To enquire into the cause why the churches fail at any time to represent themselves in the association; (5) To appoint any member or members, by and with his or their consent, to transact any business which it sees necessary; (6) To withdraw from any church in this union which shall violate the rules of this association, or deviate from the orthodox principles of religion; (7) To admit any of our distant brethren into the association, as assistants, who may be present at the time of its sitting, if it shall think necessary; (8) To adjourn themselves to any future time and place which they may think convenient to the churches in this union.

RULES OF DECORUM.

1. The association shall be opened and closed with prayer.

2. The moderator and clerk shall be chosen by the suffrage of the members present.

3. Only one person shall speak at a time, who shall arise from his seat and address the moderator.

4. The person thus speaking shall not be interrupted in his speech by any, except the moderator, till he is done speaking.

5. He shall strictly adhere to the subject, and in no wise reflect on the person who spoke before, so as to make remarks on his slips, failings or imperfections; but shall fairly state the case and matter, as near as he can, so as to convey his idea.

6. No person shall abruptly break off, or absent himself from the association, without leave obtained from it.

7. No person shall rise and speak

more than three times to one subject, without liberty obtained from the association.

8. No member of the association shall have liberty of laughing during the sitting of the same, nor of whispering in time of a public speech.

9. No member of the association shall address another in any other appellation than that of brother.

10. The moderator shall not interrupt any member in his speech, nor prohibit him from speaking till he gives his light on the subject, except he breaks the rules of this decorum.

11. The names of the several members of the association shall be enrolled by the clerk, and called over as often as the association thinks proper.

12. The moderator shall be entitled to the same privilege of speech as other members, provided the chair be filled.

13. Any member who shall wilfully and knowingly break any of these rules shall be reprov'd by the association as it may think proper.



MISSION SYSTEM OPPOSED.

While it is not our purpose to enter into a detailed account of the division among the Baptists in 1830—1835, yet we would say, “There was much opposition in this section to the system of Home and Foreign Missions, which was being practiced in Yadkin and the adjoining associations, to which the term “Missionary System” is applied. The churches were so much opposed to the “new system” that they refused, not only to send contributions for Missionary purposes, but also refused to sit in conference with, or to fellowship those who did.

The casual observer might infer from this that they were opposed to the spread of the gospel. This, however, is not true: for they favored

the spread of the gospel as much—if personal sacrifices on the part of the ministry is any evidence—as any people on earth. But their objection was that, if a compensation in dollars and cents is offered, and he who goes is sure of such compensation, there is not only danger, but *great* danger of men, who are not only not called of God to preach, but designing men who know nothing of the grace of God, going out under the title of Missionaries, and preaching such doctrine as would not only dishonor God, but would burden his people. The system of High Schools or Colleges for the preparation of young men for the ministry was also objected to strongly, on the ground that many might take the advantage of such opportunities, not for the truth's sake, but to benefit themselves.

Sunday Schools* as nurseries for

* B. F. Riley in his history of the Baptist, in the Southern

the church were also vigorously opposed. In opposing these "*new institutions*," as they styled them, the ministry of this body, or association of believers rather, went to such extremities that the churches almost entirely left off helping their own pastors; and some of their members came to the belief that it was wrong to give to a preacher who was worth more than the giver, no matter what his sacrifices might be. Thus the ministers, few in number, and all poor men, had a hard struggle to serve their churches, obeying their heavenly calling to preach the word, and support their families, remembering the Scripture that says, "But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."—1 Tim. 5:8. Yet in their hearts and minds, they,

States, says, "The first Baptist Sunday School was held in Baltimore, in 1804; the second in Charleston, S. C., in 1816, and that the American S. S. Union was organized in 1824.

if their words and works did not lie, felt that their greatest duty was to honor the cause of the Master who had called and sent them forth. The greatest theme of their preaching was the power of God in the salvation of sinners. They claimed that God was not dependent on any conditions, means, circumstances, or environments for the preaching of the word; that if his work demanded an educated man he could call one, as he did Saul (Paul) of Tarsus; or if it demanded ignorant and unlearned men he could call them, as in the case of Peter and John; that he was not dependent on Schools of learning to tame the hearts of sinful men and women, but that he writes his laws in the hearts of men of his own will and pleasure.

SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS.

The association continued to meet at different places once each year until about the date 1848. See foot note on pages 19 and 20.

In 1841, the church at Flower Gap sent delegates to the association, requesting to become a member of the body. The delegates were received and seated, and the church admitted into the association. In 1844, the church at Fisher's Gap was received in like manner.

In 1835, the association began its first correspondence. This was with New River Association. Abbott's Creek and Mayo, both older bodies than Fisher's River, were applied to, and they opened up a correspondence with the little body, the exact date not known to the writer. In the

meantime a newly constituted church by the name of Flat Shoal was admitted into the association. This church is located about four miles southwest of Danbury, Stokes Co., N. C., and now belongs to the Mayo Association.

On the 7th day of April, 1848 the little band of pilgrims, known as Fisher's River Primitive Baptist Association, met at Round Peak meetinghouse. The churches sending delegates to this association was as follows: Ararat two, Cody's Creek two, Deep Creek two, Fisher's River three, Fisher's Gap one, Flower Gap three, Franklin two, and State Road one, a total of sixteen delegates. They chose as a moderator Elder John Jones, of Ararat church, and James J. Speer, of Deep Creek church, as clerk. No corresponding or visiting brethren from sister associations reported, and very little business was transacted. They ad-

journed after a two days session, to meet October 13, 1848.*

On the 13th day of October, delegates from eleven churches met according to adjournment. Some new churches were received into their body. And several brethren from other associations or corresponding meetings reported and were seated in fellowship. They were: From New River, Elders Wm. Lawson, A. Ashworth and Samuel J. Lackey; From Abbott's Creek, Samuel Craven; From Mayo, Robert W. Hill. These Elders, seated with the brethren whose names appear in the following statistical table, composed a strong body of Christians for this early date in this mountain region.

* The old records prior to 1848, are in such condition we could not get the place of meeting; and much other information, for the same reason, cannot be had.

STATISTICAL TABLE.

| NAME OF CHURCHES. | NAMES OF DELEGATES. | No. of Members. |
|----------------------|--|--------------------|
| Ararat, | John Jones and Erasmus Canter, | 33 |
| Cody's Creek, ... | Nathan Alberty and A. Bledsoe, | 30 |
| Deep Creek, | Abraham Lakey and James J. Speer, | 15 |
| Flower Gap, | Wm. Surratt and Hugh Jones, | 29 |
| Fisher's River, .. | John Leefman, W. Staton and D. Hodges, ... | 20 |
| Flat Shoal, | L. H. Southern, J. M. Lawson and J. W. Hicks | 23 |
| Fisher's Gap, ... | Eligah Ramsey and J. Wilson, | 11 |
| Round Peak, ... | David Lowe and Wm. Norman, | 20 |
| State Road, | B. C. Phillips and Isaac Dickson, | 25 |

There were at this time 206 members in Fisher's River Association, represented by 20 of their number, and corresponding with Mayo, Abbott's Creek and New River associations, through their able ministers, it seemed that they were competent of giving advice and answering questions (this was all they claimed to have power to do) for the churches. At the request of the church at Deep Creek a presbytery was sent there to examine the qualifications of James J. Speer for the ministry. And to Flower Gap a presbytery was sent to examine the qualifications of Hugh Jones for the ministry. Correspondents were appointed to Mayo, New River and Abbott's Creek associations. It will be remembered that there had been a rent in the churches in regard to the "mission system," a few years prior to this time; and some who had joined the Missionaries, as they were called, desired to

be numbered with the "Old Baptists," and a question was raised as to the manner of receiving them. The association advised that the only proper mode was by experience and baptism. The association then adjourned to meet at Cody's Creek on Friday before the first Sunday in April, 1848.

The association met at Cody's Creek, April 6, 1849. Nine churches were represented by letters and delegates. Elder John Jones was chosen to preside over the body, and Henry Steele as clerk. Very little business was done. The presbytery appointed to Deep Creek reported the ordination of James J. Speer as an Elder in that body. The presbytery appointed to Flower Gap reported that Hugh Jones was ordained an Elder in that body. A presbytery was appointed, at the request of the church at Cody's Creek, to examine the call and qualifications

of Nathan Alberty, and ordain him to the ministry, if found orthodox. The association then adjourned to meet with the same church on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1849.

On Oct. 19th, 1849, letters were received from twelve churches, and delegates from nine. Also correspondents from two associations, to wit: William Lawson and Samuel J. Lackey from Mayo, and David Conner from New River. Elder John Jones was again chosen to preside, and Henry Steele to serve as clerk. Elder Ashley Swain being present, from Abbott's Creek, was invited and seated in council. Some items of interest claimed attention this session. One was a presbytery reported the ordination of James Gallien as deacon in the church at Round Peak; another was the report of presbytery, to wit: Elders J. J. Speer and John Jones reported the ordination

of Nathan Alberty as Elder in the church at Cody's creek; also the ordination of William Davis as deacon in the church at Stuart's Creek; and Abram Lakey at Deep Creek, in Yadkin county. The ordination of an Elder and three deacons seemed to show that some life existed in the bounds of the association at that time.

1850.

On the 12th of April, nine churches were represented by delegates meeting with the church at Fisher's River, four miles southeast of Dobson, N. C. The churches represented were Ararat, Cody's Creek, State Road, Fisher's River, Deep Creek, Flower Gap, Franklin, Stuart's Creek and Round Peak. Very little business was transacted at this time, except to appoint a committee to visit the churches that failed to send delegates to the association. Elder John Jones was again chosen moder-

ator, and Henry Steele clerk.

On the 18th day of October, 1850, the association convened with the church at Flat Shoal, Stokes Co., N. C., and was composed of delegates representing nine churches, and brethren from corresponding associations, as follows: Elder R. W. Hill from Mayo, Elders Daniel Conner and S. J. Lackey from New River, and brethren Samuel Craven and Eleanor Swain from Abbott's Creek. Elder John Jones was again made moderator, and Henry Steele clerk.

A query was presented to this association, to wit: Would it be according to gospel order for the Primitive Baptists to fellowship any member among them who joins the Free Masons, Odd Fellows, or Sons of Temperance? Answer. We have no fellowship with any member who joins those institutions.

The committee appointed to visit Mitchell's River church reported her

in a feeble condition, with the request that the ministers visit her. This, with the ordinary routine of work, constituted the business of this session.

1851

On Coe's Creek, at Hutchin's School-house, in Surry(now Yadkin) Co., N. C., the association met with Deep Creek church, April 11, 1851.

Delegates from eight churches were present, to wit: Flat Shoal, Stuart's Creek, Deep Creek, Fisher's River, Flower Gap, Cody's Creek, Ararat and State Road. No corresponding brethren were present and no business transacted, except to meet and adjourn to meet with the church at Franklin, on Friday before the 3rd Sunday in October, 1851.

On the 11th day of October, 1851, delegates of eleven churches met at Franklin meetinghouse, seven miles from Dobson, Surry Co., N. C.

The statistics from the different

churches were sent in, showing that the churches were slowly increasing in numbers. A full count showed a total of 234 members. There were at this time six elders in the associational district, to wit: John Jones, Hugh Jones, Erasmus Canter, Nathan Alberty, Eligah Ramsey and J. J. Speer. Elders A. Swain and A. Peacock, of Abbott's Creek; Elder R. W. Hill, of Mayo; Elders William Lawson, J. C. Hubbard, S. J. Lackey and Daniel Conner, all of New River district, reported as correspondents, and were seated in council with the delegates.

After the usual choosing of committees and ministers for Saturday and Sunday, they adjourned to meet next day.

Saturday morning a presbytery composed of Elders John Jones and J. J. Speer reported the ordination of John Hall to the office of deacon at Deep Creek church.

There were some reports current that the church at State Road was holding members in disorder; and so the association appointed a committee of seven to investigate the reports.

Elder John Jones served as moderator, and James J. Speer as clerk.

1852

The association next met with the church at Swan Creek, in Yadkin Co., N. C., on the 9th day of April, 1852. Only five churches were represented, and no visiting elders were present. No business was done; and, with the same moderator and clerk, they adjourned.

1853

On April 8th, messengers from eight churches, with Elders Austin J. Cassell, of New River Association, and Samuel Arrington, of Mayo Association, composed this association. Elder John Jones was again made moderator, and L. H. Southern clerk. Elders Cassell and Arrington served

with Elder N. Alberty and the moderator as a Committee of Arrangements. The churches being in peace with each other, and nothing of importance claiming attention, the time was devoted to preaching. Elders A. J. Cassell, S. Arrington and John Jones occupied the pulpit on Sunday.

1854

On Friday before the second Sunday in April, 1854, the following churches sent delegates to the association, held with the church at Round Peak, Surry Co., N. C., to wit: Cody's Creek, Round Peak, Deep Creek, Franklin, Stuart's Creek Ararat, Fisher's Gap, Flower Gap and Fisher's River. There were no visitors nor correspondents from other associations. The committee appointed to State Road church reported them in peace. The association agreed to meet only once a year for awhile. Thus the work of the association ended, with John Jones

moderator, and S. L. Fulk clerk.

The Spring term of the association having been abolished, the association met on Friday before the third Sunday in October, in the same year, at Stuart's Creek meetinghouse, about two miles from the "Old Hollow," now Mt. Airy, N. C. The correspondents present were: Elders G. W. McNeily, R. W. Hill and Samuel Arrington, from Mayo; Elders A. J. Cassell, Daniel Conner, James Thompson and S. J. Lackey from New River; Elder A. Peacock and brother S. Craven, from Abbott's Creek. Correspondents were appointed as follows: To Mayo, Elders J. Jones, H. Jones and H. Steele, with several private brethren; To New River, Elders J. Jones, H. Jones and H. Steele; To Abbott's Creek, Elders H. Steele, N. Alberty and J. Jones. The association also passed a resolution to open up a correspondence with the Apostolic Baptist, at

Montville, Conn. This was done at the request of one brother Gay. Also, we notice the agreement of the association that a Circular Letter be prepared, and that E. Canter prepare the same.

1855

Ararat church-house, about four miles northwest of Pilot Mountain, was the scene of the next meeting of the association, and which occurred the 19th day of October, 1855. The churches, at Flower Gap, Franklin, Flat Shoal, Fisher's River, Stuart's Creek, Deep Creek, Ararat, Round Peak and Cody's Creek, sent delegates, and State Road sent a letter; but Swan Creek and Fisher's Gap failed to represent themselves in the association. Correspondents were received from Mayo, New River, and Abbott's Creek. Elders Geo. W. McNeily, Robert W. Hill, James Hill and Samuel J. Arrington from Mayo, Elders A. J. Cassell, S. J. Lackey

and Claibourn Plasters, from New River; and A. Peacock, from Abbott's Creek, with several lay members composed the corresponding delegations. Elder John Jones was appointed moderator, and Samuel L. Fulk clerk. At the request of the church at Flat Shoal, Elders John Jones, Hugh Jones, E. Canter and N. Alberty were appointed as a presbytery to attend said church and ordain a deacon; also, by request of the church at Flower Gap, the same elders were appointed for a like purpose. S. L. Fulk was appointed to prepare a Circular Letter. Three hundred minutes were ordered to be printed, and \$8.66½ were sent in by the churches to pay for the same. It should be noted here, that, at each of these associations, about three sermons were preached each day. The preachers were chosen by the suffrage of the delegates, and all the officers of the association, even

the committees, were chosen in like manner. It should also be noted that all the preaching was both impromptu and extemporaneous, as none of the preachers ever prepare or study sermons, a feature very characteristic of these preachers.

1856

According to previous arrangements, the delegates from ten churches met on the first day of August, 1856, at Cody's Creek meetinghouse, Surry Co., N. C., as follows: From Ararat, Elders J. Jones and E. Canter, also, brethren E. Denny and R. R. Jones; Fisher's River, D. Hodges; Cody's Creek, Elder N. Alberty, M. Nicholson and James Snow; Fisher's Gap, Elder Eligah Ramey; Franklin, S. L. Fulk and F. B. Riggan; Deep Creek, A. B. Lakey; Stuart's Creek, R. D. R. Moss; Round Peak, James Galyean; State Road, Jesse McKaughan; Flower Gap, Elder Hugh Jones. Flat Shoal and Swan Creek

failed to send either letters or delegates. Correspondents were received as follows: From New River, Elders D. Conner, C. Plaster and W. Moran. This was the only association that sent correspondents. Elder J. Jones was again chosen to preside, and S. L. Fulp to record the deliberations. Preachers were selected for the stand and committees chosen, etc. The presbyteries appointed to Flat Shoal and Flower Gap failed to attend, and were reappointed. Correspondents were appointed to sister associations, to wit: New River, Abbott's Creek and Mayo. As nothing had been heard from the Apostolic Baptists in Conn., no further effort was made to correspond with them. The Circular Letter, as written by S. L. Fulp, was ordered to be attached to the minutes; and three hundred copies of the minutes were ordered to be printed. The work of the body being completed, the as-

sociation adjourned to meet with the church at Fisher's River meeting-house, about four miles northeast of Dobson, which they did on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1857.

1857

Delegates were present from only nine churches. Franklin, Fisher's Gap and Swan Creek were not represented. Elders R. W. Hill and Levi I. Bodenheimer, from Mayo; and Elders A. J. Cassell and Daniel Conner, from New River, were seated as correspondents.

Elder John Jones was again chosen to preside, and S. L. Fulk clerk.

The presbytery had again failed to attend the request of the church at Flat Shoal, also at Flower Gap, and were a second time reappointed. Preachers were chosen for the ensuing days as follows: Elders D. Conner, J. Jones and E. Canter, for Saturday; and Elders A. J. Cassell, Levi

I. Bodenheimer and R. W. Hill, for Sunday. Elders Nathan Alberty and J. McKaughan were appointed to visit the church at Swan Creek and report the reason of her failure to attend or represent herself in the association. \$9.27½ was contributed to pay for printing, and three hundred copies of the minutes were ordered to be printed. Thus closing the business of the association, they adjourned to meet with the church at Flat Shoal, in the Co. of Stokes, about five miles southwest of Danbury, which they did on the 24th day of September, 1858.

1858

Delegates representing eleven churches were present and seated in council, as follows: Stuart's Creek, R. D. R. Moss and W. L. Minter; Fisher's River, D. Hodges; Cody's Creek, Nathan Alberty and Moses Pilson; Flat Shoal, J. Hicks and James George; Round Peak, James

Galyean; State Road, Jesse McKaughan; Deep Creek, John Tate and A. B. Lakey; Ararat, Elder John Jones, Edmond Denny and W. F. Trogdon; Flower Gap, Elder Hugh Jones; Franklin, A. Dicken and C. Gentry; Tom's Creek, J. A. Flippin and C. Farris. Fisher's Gap and Swan Creek each failed to send either letter or delegates. Correspondents were received and seated as follows: From Mayo, Elder R. W. Hill; From Abbott's Creek, Duke Price, Samuel Craven and Geo. Beck; From Smith's River, Elders S. J. Lackey and A. J. Cassell. Elders Cassell and Lackey formerly belonged to New River; but in the fall of 1857, or the Spring of 1858—we have failed to get the exact date—Smith's River was formed or organized, and some of the churches and elders which had been in the New River District, became members of the Smith's River District. The first

business, after seating all the correspondents, was the reception of a newly constituted church (Tom's Creek) that had sent a petition and delegates. The delegates were seated, the moderator giving them the right hand of fellowship.

Elder John Jones was again chosen moderator, and Moses Pilson clerk. Elders A. J. Cassell, S. J. Lackey and Nathan Alberty were made a committee to act with the moderator and clerk, in arranging business for the association. After choosing Elders Hugh Jones, Nathan Alberty and Giles Martin, to preach on Saturday; and Elders R. W. Hill, A. J. Cassell and S. J. Lackey to preach on Sunday, the association adjourned to meet on Saturday.

The custom of the association was to meet and organize on Friday. Then select preachers to preach during the meeting, and so forth. But all the business was done on

Saturday. We had not noted this before, nor will we in the future. Each session will be considered under one general rule or custom.

The next business of the association was to call the roll of messengers and correspondents. This, also, is a rule which we had not heretofore mentioned, and will, perhaps, mention it no more, as it was always done at each session. They also read the Rules of Decorum, a copy of which appears on page 15 of this little volume. Another custom we had not mentioned, and, perhaps, will not again mention, was: The brethren, appointed as correspondents to visit sister associations, were called upon to make a report of their visits. This was done at this meeting, and at all other meetings of the association. The presbyteries, which had been appointed so often, reported that they had attended the church at Flower Gap

and had ordained F. M. McCraw to the office of deacon; but that they had failed to attend at Flat Shoal. This request seemes to have been withdrawn, as no reappointment was made. The committee to Swan Creek reported that said church was without a pastor, but wished to remain a member of the association. The Circular Letter was ordered to be printed, and Elder Nathan Alberty was ordered to prepare the next. Correspondents were appointed to Mayo, Smith's River and Abbott's Creek. Three hundred copies of minutes were ordered printed, and \$11.20 contributed to pay for same. After agreeing to meet with the church at Deep Creek, in Yadkin Co., the association adjourned.

1859

On the 23rd day of September, 1859, delegates representing their different churches met with the church at Deep Creek, in Yadkin

Co., N. C. The church, at Franklin, Round Peak, Fisher's Gap and Swan Creek, sent no delegates. The association seated correspondents as follows: From Mayo, Elders R. W. Hill and Levi I. Bodenheimer; from Smith's River, Elder S. J. Lackey, with minutes; from Abbott's Creek, Samuel Craven; and, also, received a file of minutes from both Kehukee and Little River Associations, and seated Elder Wm. Burns, from Country Line Association.

Elder John Jones was again chosen moderator, and Moses Pilson was made clerk. After reading, as usual, the Rules of Decorum, calling the roll, etc., a presbytery of Elders was appointed to attend and fill the request from each of four churches, to wit: Stuart's Creek, Cody's Creek, Tom's Creek and State Road. Then, after appointing correspondents to Abbott's Creek, Mayo and Smith's River, and ordering the clerk to

have 350 copies of minutes printed, they adjourned to meet with the church at Tom's Creek, in Surry Co., N. C., ten miles north of Pilot Mountain.

1860

Delegates, with letters, representing twelve churches (Swan Creek not represented) met with the church above mentioned, on September 21, 1860, and seated as correspondents Elders R. W. Hill and S. Arrington, from Mayo; Elders Joshua Adams, S. J. Lackey, A. J. Cassell and C. Plaster, from Smith's River; and Elder Wm. Lawson from New River. The same moderator and clerk were chosen. The presbyteries reported the ordination of Charles Farris, as deacon at Tom's Creek; Moses Pilsen, as deacon at Cody's Creek; and that brother McKaughan having died, they did not attend the church at State Road. They were reappointed to Stuart's Creek.

For some years before this time, we have been unable to ascertain the exact number of members; but, at this date, there were about 235 members.

After the usual appointing of correspondents, etc., the association agreeing to meet with the church at Franklin, adjourned.

1861

At the place where the church at Franklin usually worshiped, delegates representing twelve churches met, on the 20th day of Sept., 1861. Swan Creek again failed to send either letter or delegates. They seated correspondents from Smith's River and Abbott's Creek, and received a file of minutes from Mayo. Elder John Jones and Moses Pilson were made moderator and clerk.

The only important business was responding to the request of the church at Franklin, by appointing a presbytery of Elders to visit said

church, examine, and, if found orthodox, set apart or ordain T. J. Lawson to the work of the ministry. And, after the usual appointing of correspondents to Abbott's Creek, Mayo, Smith's River and New River, the association adjourned to meet with the church at Swan Creek meetinghouse, in Yadkin Co., N. C.

1862

The association met as preappointed, on the 26th day of September, 1862. Only seven churches were represented. Six failing to send delegates.

The presbytery appointed to Franklin had failed to attend, and was reappointed.

The next session of the association was held with the church at State Road, near the Virginia and North Carolina line.

1863-4

This association convened on the 25th day of September, 1863, and

was composed of only a few delegates and ministers. This was the second year of the Civil War. However, the presbytery appointed to Franklin reported that they attended and ordained T. J. Lawson as an elder in said body. Another presbytery was appointed by the request of the same church for the purpose of ordaining a deacon in said church.

With the same moderator, but with Drewry Hodge as clerk, they adjourned to meet with the church at Flower Gap, in Carroll Co., Va.

They met at Flower Gap, sometime in Sept., 1864; but this meeting was also small on account of the Civil War which was yet raging.

1865

On the 22nd day of September, 1865, and—peace having been made between the Union and Confederate States—delegates representing twelve churches assembled with the church at Fisher's Gap. Elder John Jones

was moderator, and M. Pilson was clerk. The ordination of Calvin Gentry, at Franklin, and Isaac Edwards, at Flower Gap, to the office of deacon in their respective bodies was reported. Correspondents to the associations—New River, Smith's River, Mayo and Abbott's Creek were appointed; and then they adjourned to meet with the church at Round Peak, Surry Co., N. C.

1866

The association met according to adjournment, Sept. 21, 1866. Twelve churches sent delegates. Thirty-one members had been added, eighteen of which were at Tom's Creek. Correspondents from New River and Smith's River associations were seated. No others reported. Very little business was done, except to appoint a presbytery to attend a request of the church at Tom's Creek. Elder J. Jones again moderator, and M. Pilson clerk.

1867

On the 27th day of October, 1867, the association met at Stuart's Creek, near Mt. Airy, Surry Co., N. C.

Only eleven churches now constituted the association. Swan Creek, in Yadkin Co., N. C., had dissolved; and, as is supposed, the members were added to the church at Deep Creek, in the same county. The exact date of the dissolution is not known to us.

There had been a great revival at Tom's Creek, 67 members having been added to the church the past year, making 85 new members within the past two years.

Another change might have been noted sooner. It was this: The church at Flat Shoal was annexed to Mayo Association, about the date of 1863. At this association was a large delegation of corresponding brethren. Smith's River, New River and Mayo associations each send-

ing good delegations. We here note some of the elders. A. J. Cassell, C. Plaster, William Moran, A. Moran R. W. Hill, T. S. Ring and J. M. Blancett. There was but little business to engage the body, except to appoint a presbytery to attend the request of the church at Ararat; and to reappoint a presbytery to Tom's Creek, the former appointees having failed to attend. These presbyteries were requested for the ordination of deacons.

1868

The association convened with the church at Ararat meetinghouse, about one mile southwest of the Douglas ford across the Ararat River. The meeting occurred on the 10th day of April, 1868. It was previously agreed to hold two sessions each year, one in April, and the other in October. At this meeting ten churches were represented. The correspondents, few in number, re-

ported and were seated. The presbytery, which had been called by the church at Tom's Creek, met two miles east of Pilot Mountain, and organized a church (of members mostly from Tom's Creek), and ordained James George and P. W. Lawrence to the office of deacon. The new body assumed the name of the church at Volunteer. Thus we have the first line of the history of said church.

The new church at Volunteer was blessed with the next meeting of the association, which occurred on the 23rd day of October, 1868. The dozen churches, now composing the association, contained 350 members. Tom's Creek had given to Volunteer 30 members, and had thirteen additions within the last year, making 98 additions to Tom's Creek in two and one-half years. At this meeting a large number of correspondents were received from the sister associa-

tions with which this association was in correspondence. All was peace and love. The brotherhood of those days can and will recall the pleasant associations at this meeting.

The ordination of F. R. Stone and Edmund Denny to the office of deacon, at Ararat, was reported. Also, a presbytery was called and appointed to the church at Tom's Creek.

With Elder J. Jones and Moses Pilson yet serving as moderator and clerk, the association adjourned to meet with the church at Cody's Creek, which they did Apr. 9th, 1869.

1869

The twelve churches, now composing the body, were joined by the church at Rock-Spring, sending delegates and a petition for reception. No correspondents were present. The ordination of Henderson Cain to the office of elder, and Peterson

Slate to the office of deacon, was reported from Tom's Creek. And a presbytery was appointed to attend at Flower Gap. The moderator was John Jones, and the clerk was Moses Pilson.

On the 22nd day of October, in the same year, the association assembled with the church at Fisher's River meetinghouse. Twelve churches were represented. Rock Spring sent no delegates or letter. A large number of corresponding brethren were present. The ordination of William B. Gates to the office of elder at Flower Gap church was reported; and a presbytery of Elders was appointed to fill a request from each of the following churches, to wit: Ararat, Tom's Creek and Cody's Creek. After appointing correspondents to Mayo, New River, Smith's River and Abbott's Creek Associations, they adjourned to meet with the church at Deep Creek,

two miles north of Eastbend, Yadkin Co., N. C.

1870

At this meeting, which occurred on the 8th day of April, 1870, twelve churches were represented, but Rock Spring was again absent.

The presbytery appointed to Ararat reported the ordination of Moses G. Harbour, Archilles M. Denny, and Gabriel Denny to the office of elder. Also the ordination of Joseph E. Atkinson, as elder at Tom's Creek. The ordination of Henry J. Wood, as deacon at Cody's Creek, was likewise reported.

We also note here the beginning of a trouble. About the close of the Civil War some members of the church had joined a secret order called "Red Strings," a party of which the writer knows nothing, it being "secret." Some of the members protested against it. The matter had been before the association

at a previous session, and the association as a body declared, "We hold no fellowship with any secret organization," and advised the churches composing the body to deal with members belonging to secret orders as transgressors; and at this meeting a request was made that the churches report whether any persons belonging to such orders were held in fellowship. The next meeting was to be with the church at Tom's Creek, and to commence on the 21st day of October, 1870: Moses Pilson was still acting as secretary, and Elder John Jones as moderator.

We also note quite an ingathering of members at Flower Gap, just previous to the last assembling of this body.

On the 21st day of October, 1870, delegates representing twelve churches met with corresponding brethren from Mayo, New River and Smith's River Associations at Tom's Creek

church-house. An increase in the number of members in nearly all the churches was reported; and although the increase in each church was small; yet it amounted in all to 33 members. All appeared in peace, but with Rock Spring still unheard from.

The matter of "Secret Orders" had caused very little trouble up to this time. However, there were three churches that had made no report on the matter.

1871

The next meeting of the body was with the church at Franklin, April 7, 1871, when delegates from twelve churches met with correspondents from New River and Mayo Associations. The ordination of Harden Hanes, as deacon in the church at State Road, was reported. The matter of "Secret Orders" had been adjusted satisfactorily, and all the churches manifested a healthy con-

dition, except Rock Spring which, as yet, had not been heard from.

The fall term of the association was held at State Road, and convened Oct. 20, 1871. A few delegates from all the churches, except Rock Spring was present. Smith's River was the only association that sent correspondents. An addition of 48 members during the past year was reported from all the churches, Deep Creek and Flower Gap reporting 13 and 14 respectively. Eleven members had died during the previous year. And the membership, though only 445 in number, was active in their devotions, and in sending corresponding brethren to the four associations nearest them, as often as convenient. And at this session they agreed to take up correspondence with Kehukee and Little River Associations by minutes. These associations being in the eastern part of North Carolina, the

brethren did not wish to make the distance in person, so they exchanged minutes with them. Elder John Jones was still serving as moderator, and Moses Pilson as clerk.

1872

The spring session was held with the church at Flower Gap, April 12, 1872. The ordination of B. F. Wood and Wm. T. Lewis to the office of deacon at Fisher's River, and H. Herring and S. Gill to the same office, in the church at Stuart's Creek, was reported.

The resolution passed in 1869, regarding "Secret Orders," was made a part of the Constitution, and read: "We hold no fellowship with 'Secret Orders.'"

After the usual appointing of correspondents, the association adjourned.

A full delegation representing all the churches (thirteen in number) assembled with the church at Fisher's

Gap, on the 25th day of October, 1872. A small increase of members was reported. Correspondents from Mayo, New River and Smith's River were received. No business of interest called the attention of the body, and a general condition of love and peace was manifested.

1873

The next session was held with the church at Round Peak. All the churches were again represented. In the absence of Elder John Jones, Elder Hugh Jones was chosen to preside. Smith's River and New River Associations corresponded by delegates. The ordination of Jacob Lowe and Bennett Galean to the office of deacon, in the church at Fisher's Gap, was reported. A presbytery was appointed to attend at White Oak Spring, near Brown's Factory, and constitute a new church there, if found expedient.

The association met at the place

where the new body had been constituted, and received the new church by the name of White Oak Spring. All the other churches, except Tom's Creek, sent delegates. New River, Mayo and Abbott's Creek associations were represented by corresponding delegates. The association appointed correspondents to New River, Smith's River, Abbott's Creek and Mayo Associations; and sent minutes to Kehukee and Little River Associations.

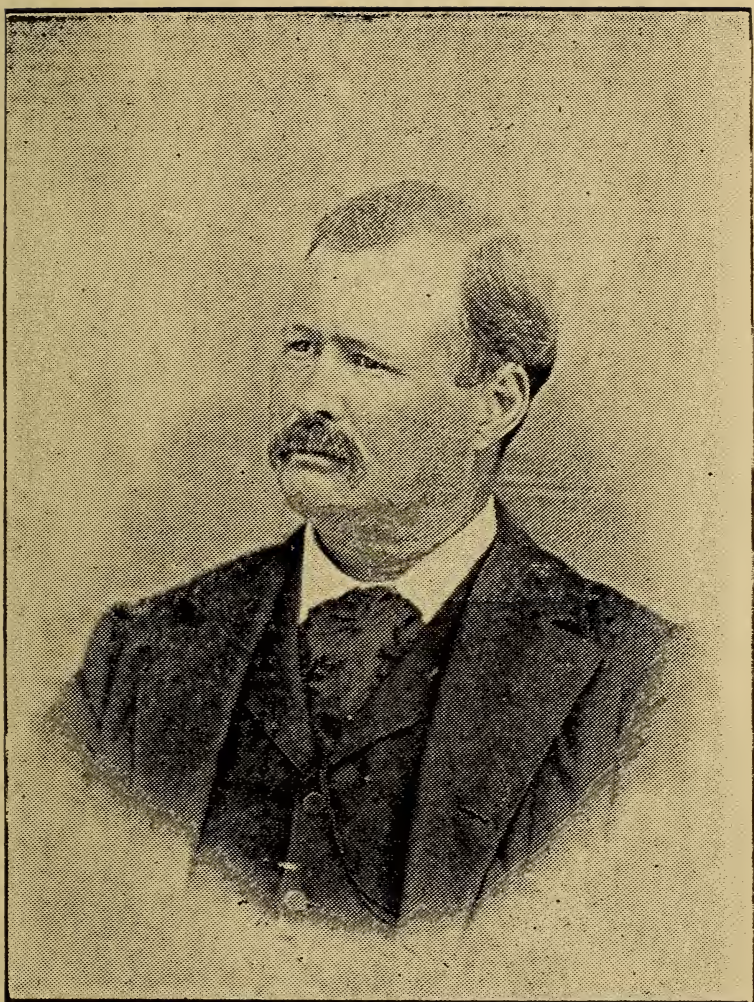
1874

The next session was held with the church at Stuart's Creek. All the churches except Deep Creek sent delegates. Also a newly constituted church, located on top of the Blue Ridge, in Virginia, one and one-half miles east of Fancy Gap, and called by the name of Elk Spur, was received and their delegates seated as a part of the body. Correspondents from Mayo and New River Associa-

tions were seated in fellowship. The ordination of James D. Draughn, as elder at Stuart's Creek church was reported.

The next session, held with the church at Ararat, on the 23rd day of October, 1874, was the meeting of delegates representing all the churches, 15 in number, and corresponding delegates from all four of the bodies with which correspondence had been carried on. Elder John Jones and Moses Pilson were again chosen moderator and clerk. A steady, but small increase in members was reported by the churches. A membership numbering just 500 was given in the statistics. The ordination of H. Hawks, to the office of deacon in the church at Flower Gap, was reported. Correspondents were sent to the four corresponding associations, and minutes to Kehukee and Little River.

The following is a list of the min-



ELDER JAMES D. DRAUGHN, MEMBER OF
THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORY,
WHITE PLAINS, N. C.

isters in the association: John Jones, Hugh Jones, Isaac Edwards, Nathan Alberty. T. J. Lawson, Henderson Cain, Alexander Moran, John Moran, Joseph E. Atkinson, Wm. B. Gates, Robert Welbourn, M. G. Harbour, A. M. Denny, G. Denny and James D. Draughn.

1875

The next session was held at White Oak Spring, April 23, 1875. All the churches sent a full delegation. The ordination of Cornelius York and Enox York to the office of deacon, in the church at Rock Spring, was reported. The churches, all in peace, were requested to fast and hold prayer on the 4th day of the following July, it being Sunday; and sister associations were requested to unite in the same.

Elk Spur was the scene of the next meeting, which occurred on the 22nd day of October, 1875. All the churches, except State Road and

Stuart's Creek, sent delegates. A large correspondence was present; also, minutes were received from Kehukee and Little River associations. Very few additions to the churches were reported; but the churches were in peace. Very little business was done, except the usual routine of appointing correspondents, etc.

1876

The next session was held on the 21st day of April, 1876. All the churches sending delegates, except State Road. Correspondents from New River, Smith's River, Mayo and Abbott's Creek were present and participated in the services.

Much grief was caused at this meeting by the announcement of the death of the much beloved Elder John Jones, under whose watchcare the association had experienced much success, peace, joy and love.

Elder Hugh Jones was selected to take the place of Elder John Jones

as moderator. Moses Pilson was still clerk.

The ordination of A. C. Woodruff to the office of elder, in the church at Franklin, was reported.

The next meeting was with the church at Cody's Creek, on the 20th day of October, 1876. Round Peak was the only church failing to send delegates. Quite a large delegation was present. There was also a large number of correspondents present, and minutes from Kehukee and Little River were received.

The ordination of William Golding to the office of deacon, in the church at Fisher's Gap, was reported.

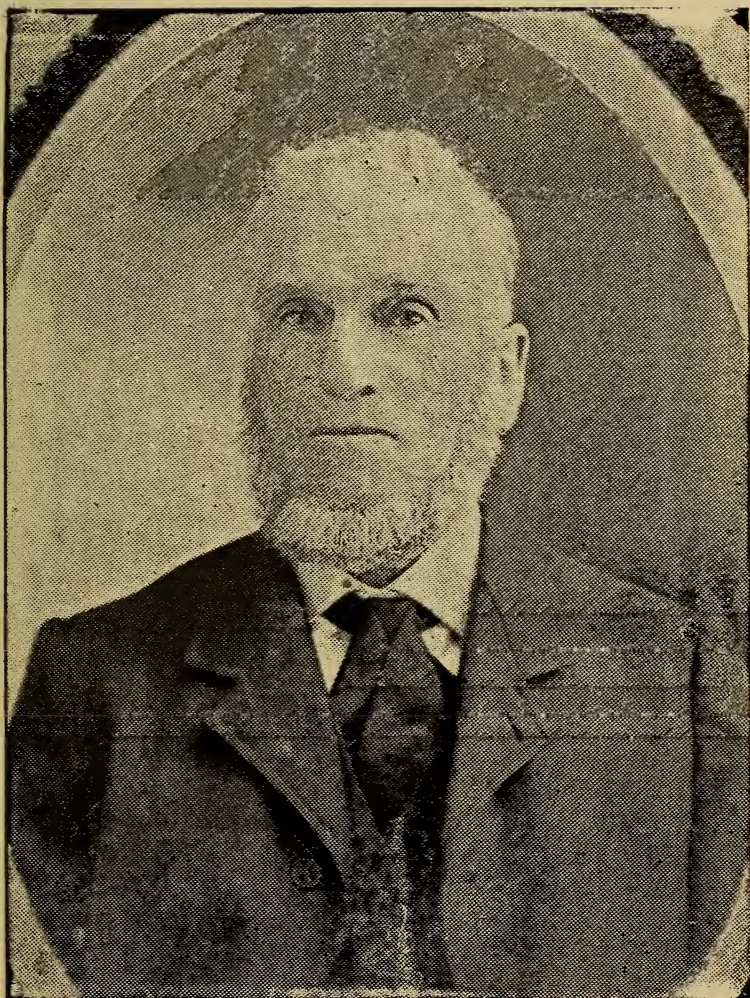
1877

Delegates representing each of the fifteen churches composing the association met with the church at Fisher's River, on the 20th day of April, 1877. Only a few corresponding brethren were present.

Elder M. G. Harbour was chosen

moderator, and Elder A. M. Denny clerk.

Previous to this time, an effort had been made to bring about a union between Fisher's River and the Mountain Associations; but had, as yet, been a failure. At this session this body appointed a delegation to confer with the Mountain Association and settle all impending difficulties. The committee was composed of Elders H. Cain, G. Denny, A. Moran, T. J. Lawson, M. G. Harbour, H. Jones, N. Alberty, A. C. Woodruff and J. E. Atkinson, with laymembers F. M. McCraw, C. B. Denny, Wm. Golding, H. C. Booker and C. Blackburn. Until this time the association had known but little trouble. The membership now numbered more than five hundred. The churches were all in peace. Love seemed to be the theme of each member. But this is what is often called a lull before a storm. And follow-



ELDER M. G. HARBOUR, MODERATOR OF
THE ASSOCIATION FOR TWENTY-
SEVEN YEARS, AND A MEMBER OF
THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORY.

ing this decade of prosperity was a decade of adversity in which the strong were made to weep, and the wise were made to wander.

The next ten years will be treated as a whole, and the results will be given without entering into detail.

The above committee was to meet with a committee from the Mountain and the New River Associations on Thursday, April 24th, 1878, at Tom's Creek meetinghouse. The purpose of the meeting, as before mentioned, was to affect a correspondence between the Mountain and Fisher's River Associations.



TEN YEARS OF TROUBLE.

1877—1887

We are now entering what may be well termed "Ten years of trouble." On the 26th day of October, 1877, the association, with a full representation, being in conference at Deep Creek church, in Yadkin Co., N. C., had learned that their effort, through their committee, to adjust the matter of correspondence with the Mountain Association was a failure. It will here be noted that the Mountain and New River Associations were in full correspondence with each other, and had been more or less ever since 1813; (See Hassell's Church History, page 922) and that Fisher's River and New River had been in direct correspondence ever since 1835, or from about the time that Fisher's River was organized. This being the case, there was the greater induce-

ment for the correspondence between the Mountain and Fisher's River Associations. There seemed to be no insincerity in the matter on the part of any one.

At the meeting of the association at its regular spring term, at Tom's Creek, on the 25th day of April, 1878, the ordination of J. M. Jones and T. R. Hall to the office of deacon, in Deep Creek church; also the ordination of Abner Gardner to the office of elder in the church at Elk Spur, and Calvin Blackburn to the office of elder, in the church at Flower Gap, was reported.

The report of the committee, appointed to meet Thursday 24th, disclosed the fact that no correspondence had been agreed upon. Two of the churches of Fisher's River, to wit: Fisher's Gap and Franklin were holding communion with members of the Mountain Association; and as they persisted in so doing, and the associ-

ation considering it disorder, both churches were dropped from the fellowship of the body. New River was also notified that the correspondence with her would end, unless she dropped the Mountain. This New River refused to do. So, at the following session, which convened at Flower Gap, October 25th, 1878, the association passed the following resolution:

“Although we acknowledge the New River Association to be a Christian body, yet, in consequence of her being in correspondence with the Mountain Association, which we believe to be an unorthodox body, not strictly adhering to the faith and practice of the Primitive Baptist, indulging in protracted meetings and other unlawful defects, not approved by us, we drop correspondence for the time present.”

The association also advised the remaining churches to deal with such

members as might correspond in a conflicting manner. The reader, who may be blest to know any thing of the love existing among God's people, will agree with the writer that these were perilous times. Here was an aged body of orthodox Christians debarred from the fellowship or communion with another body, who themselves own them as such. Yet nothing wrong was intended.

Another great trouble arose from this breaking of correspondence. Some members of a church would believe the Mountain District, or Association to be orthodox, while others of the same church, perhaps, would take the opposite view of the matter; and even churches, themselves, became so involved in the controversy, that members of one church would leave their home church and join another in a different association, hoping, by so doing, to set themselves in order. We remember one instance

—and there may have been others—where the parties thus changing their membership were re-baptized. That State Road church had chosen a moderator or pastor from the Mountain Association was reported to the Association in conference at Round Peak, April 25, 1879. Accordingly fellowship was withdrawn from her for the present. Stuart's Creek church was also called in question as to her loyalty to the association, she having chosen a moderator from the New River District. At the next session of the association, which was with the church at Ararat, Oct. 24, 1879, Rock Spring church refused to represent herself and shared the same fate.

The next session of the association was April 23, 1880, at White Oak Spring, at which time and place the ordination of A. M. Branscome to the office of elder, and G. Hawks to the office of deacon, in the church at

Elk Spur, was reported.

October 22, 1880, the association met, but very little or no business was done, except to appoint correspondents to each of the associations with which the body was corresponding.

At the following session of the association which was held at Volunteer, April 22, 1881. There was very little business done, except the usual routine work.

Cody's Creek was honored with the next meeting of the association, Oct. 21, 1881. At this meeting Eld. M. G. Harbour reported that he had visited Mayo as a correspondent, in the preceeding May; and finding correspondents there from New River, he was not willing to sit with them; and as Mayo refused to decide between the two (Fisher's River and New River), by consent it was agreed to withhold correspondence for 12 months. We also note here that the

ordination of John Nunn to the office of elder, at Tom's Creek, was reported to the association. We further note here that at this meeting a door was proclaimed open to any and all churches, or members who had departed, to return and give satisfactory evidence of their loyalty to the original faith and practice of the Primitive Baptists.

The next session was held with the church at Fisher's River, on the 21st day of April, 1882. The ordination of Wm. Golding to the office of deacon, in the church at Round Peak, was reported.

Two letters were presented from the church at Ararat. The minority was received and the majority rejected after some debate on the matter.

Deep Creek church was next to entertain the association. This meeting occurred on Oct. 20, 1882. At this meeting a committee of six, to wit: Elders M. G. Harbour, J. Nunn,

C. Blackburn and A. Gardner, with lay members T. R. Hall and J. M. Jones was appointed to confer with a committee from New River, the time and place of meeting to be at Elk Spur, Nov. 22, 1882.

The next session of the association was held with the church at Tom's Creek, April 20, 1883. The report of the committee appointed to meet with the committee from New River at Elk Spur, disclosed the following agreement:

“After a general interview agreed to report to our respective associations that we think that each association should advise churches and members in their bounds, without letters or certificates of dismissal from their churches or associations from whence they came, to return and make reconciliation. This done in Committee and signed,

M. G. HARBOUR, Mod.

ISAAC WEBB, Clerk.

After the report was read, it was duly ratified by the association.

At the next session of the association, which was held with the church at Flower Gap, Oct. 26, 1883, in addition to corresponding brethren from Smith's River and Mayo (correspondence having been formally resumed with the latter) there was a delegation from New River, which was seated as a committee. After appointing correspondents to Smith's River, Mayo and Abbott's Creek, a letter was prepared and another committee appointed to New River. These bore the message of hope that all the difficulties and obstacles might be removed. The association also pledged herself to solemnly and strictly conform to the requirements of the respective committees, and expressed a desire and hope that New River would do the same.

The association next convened at Round Peak, April 25, 1884. But

few delegates were present and no correspondents. Very little business was transacted.

The next session met with the church at Ararat, October 24, 1884. A small delegation from the churches was present. The church at Ararat had reunited, and furnished a good delegation. There were also correspondents present from Mayo, Smith's River and Abbott's Creek Associations. Two letters from Tom's Creek were presented. The representatives of the majority were received and seated, and the minority advised to return and labor in a gospel way for peace. Also all churches in the Association holding members from the churches in the Mountain District, which had come therefrom without letters, were advised to return and labor in a gospel way for peace.

On the 24th day of April, 1885, the association met with the church

at Elk Spur. The delegation was small, and correspondents but few.

The death of Elder Hugh Jones, who had served the association for some years as moderator, was reported; and Elder M. G. Harbour was elected to serve in said capacity.

The "open door action" of October, 1881, was rescinded, and New River notified.

White Oak Spring was honored with the next session, which convened October 23, 1885. Elder M. G. Harbour was chosen to preside, and Elder A. M. Denny to act as clerk. Correspondents from Mayo, Smith's River, Abbott's Creek and Country Line were received and seated. Also a committee from New River.

In answer to New River, the association said, "We do not hold you in bonds for your correspondence with the Mountain." The association also appointed another committee to confer with New River for a final

settlement of all difficulties existing between the two bodies.

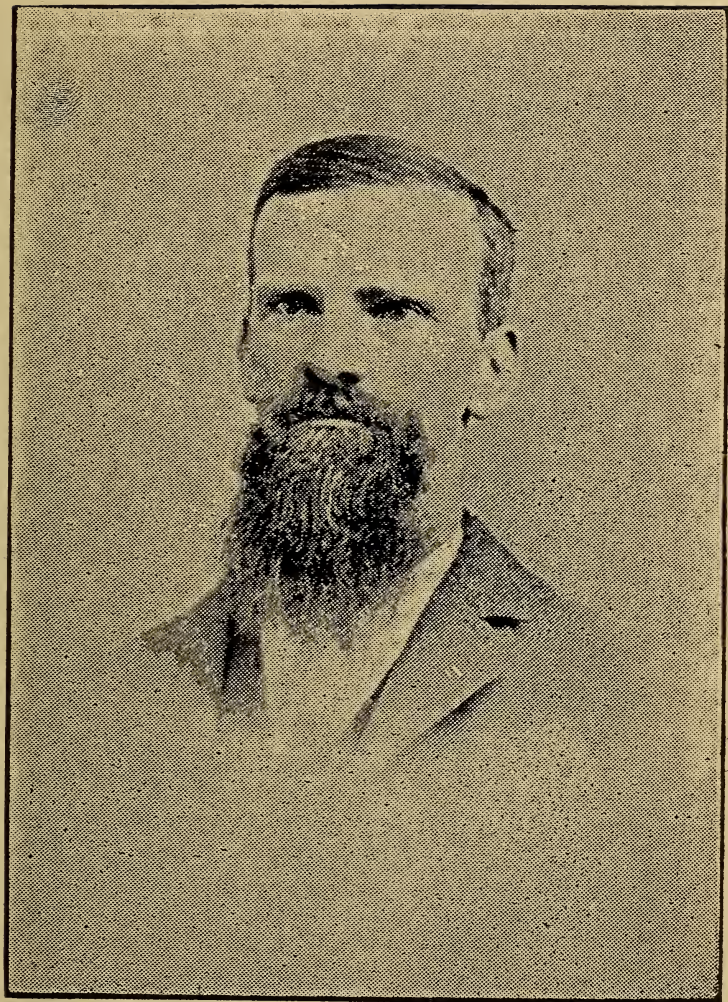
The association met at Volunteer, Stokes Co., N. C., April 23rd, 1886. A new church had been constituted near the town of Siloam, and named Hogan's Creek. This church with all the others in the association sent delegates who were seated in the body. The ordination of C. B. Denny to the office of elder, in the church at Ararat, was reported. Nothing more of interest was done at this session. On Oct. 22, 1886, messengers representing fourteen churches (Volunteer sending only a letter) met with the church at Cody's Creek. The church at State Road, Rock Spring, Franklin and at Stuart's Creek, all sending delegates and becoming reconciled with the association, full fellowship was restored and their delegates were all seated. The Mountain Association was acknowledged as an orthodox body; but as some of her church-

es were holding members from some of the churches in Fisher's River Association, no correspondence was agreed upon as yet, although the other obstacles had been removed.

Peace was now complete with New River and full correspondence resumed, and corresponding brethren appointed; also to Smith's River, Mayo and Abbott's Creek.

The next session was held with the church at State Road, April 22, 1887. State Road returning, her delegates were seated in the body. Also seated Calvin Gentry as the first correspondent from the Mountain Association; and appointed correspondents to the Mountain Association.





**ELDER C. B. DENNY, MEMBER OF THE
COMMITTEE ON HISTORY,
PINNACLE, N. C.**

LOVE, PEACE AND UNION.

The war over; and correspondence having been resumed, a new era will be noted in the affairs of the Association. Where strife and seeming warfare had existed, peace and love prevailed. Instead of wrangling over the question of correspondence, the association would go through the business of the body and soon proceed to the congregation with singing, preaching and praising God for his wonderful deliverance.

At the next session of the association, held with the church at Hogan's Creek, Oct. 21, 1887, all the churches, sixteen in number, sent delegates, and all were received and seated in fellowship. Correspondents and visitors were received and seated from Abbott's Creek. Smith's River, New River, Mountain, Mayo, Silver Creek, Senter and Roaring River Associations; and correspondents were appointed to each of these bodies, except Silver Creek. The re-

ception of more than fifty members by the different churches in the past year was reported. All was peace and love. What a change!

On the 20th of April, 1888, the association met at Rock Spring. All the churches were represented and a good correspondence from the sister associations was received. The ordination of W. B. Southern and C. L. Arrington to the office of deacon, at Tom's Creek; Marion Welbourn to the office of deacon, at Rock Spring; and J. J. Ayers to the office of deacon, at Elk Spur, was reported to the association.

The next session was held with the church at Stuart's Creek, Oct. 26, 1888. All the churches sent delegates; all the delegates were seated, and a newly constituted church was received by the name of Union. This body, situated about six miles south of Dobson, was composed of members who had taken letters of dismission from the church at Hogan's Creek. A general revival was reported, with some additions to nearly all the churches; but the most was at

Hogan's Creek. This church reported 38 additions to the church, all of which was received by experience and baptism. In all the churches together the number reached about 90, besides 25 which had been received by letter from other churches, and 16 that had been restored to fellowship, from which they had hitherto been excluded. In all, for the last year, the increase was about 130 members. Correspondents and visitors were seated from New River, Mayo, Smith's River, Abbott's Creek, Roaring River, Mountain and Country Line associations; and corresponding brethren were appointed in return. Correspondents were appointed to Senter, association, also; and ordered minutes sent to Kehukee and Little River Associations. The ordination of John G. Jones, King D. Key and Azariah M. Denny to the office of deacon, in the newly constituted church at Union, was reported. Up to this time all presbyteries had been first requested by the church and appointed by the association; but at this meeting the association advised

the churches when in need of presbyteries to ordain deacons to call them from sister churches.

The next session was held with the newly constituted church at Union, April 26th, 1889. All the churches were represented. There was not a very large delegation of correspondents present, but all who were present were seated in council with the association.

Elder Isaac Jones, of White Oak Association, and Eld. D. N. Gore, of Mill Branch Association, were present. Fisher's River offered correspondence by minutes (or messengers, when convenient) to each of these associations; and each body was to be informed through its representative elder then present.

As some of the colored members of the different churches had obtained letters of dismission to join the colored churches; and as a report had become current that these colored churches were in disorder, the association appointed a committee to visit the colored association, and impart such instruction to them in be-

half of this association, as it might find necessary.

On the 25th day of Oct., 1889, the association met at Fisher's Gap. All the churches were represented, and a church by the name of Senter presented a letter from the Mountain Association, and was received, and her delegates seated. Also, we notice that a newly constituted church by the name of Rockhouse, was received into the association. This church was composed of members who took letters of dismission from the Church at Tom's Creek, and is situated in Stokes Co., N. C., near the old Historic Rock Fortress, built by Jack Martin, more than a century ago.

There were quite a number of correspondents present from the different associations, and all were seated in conference.

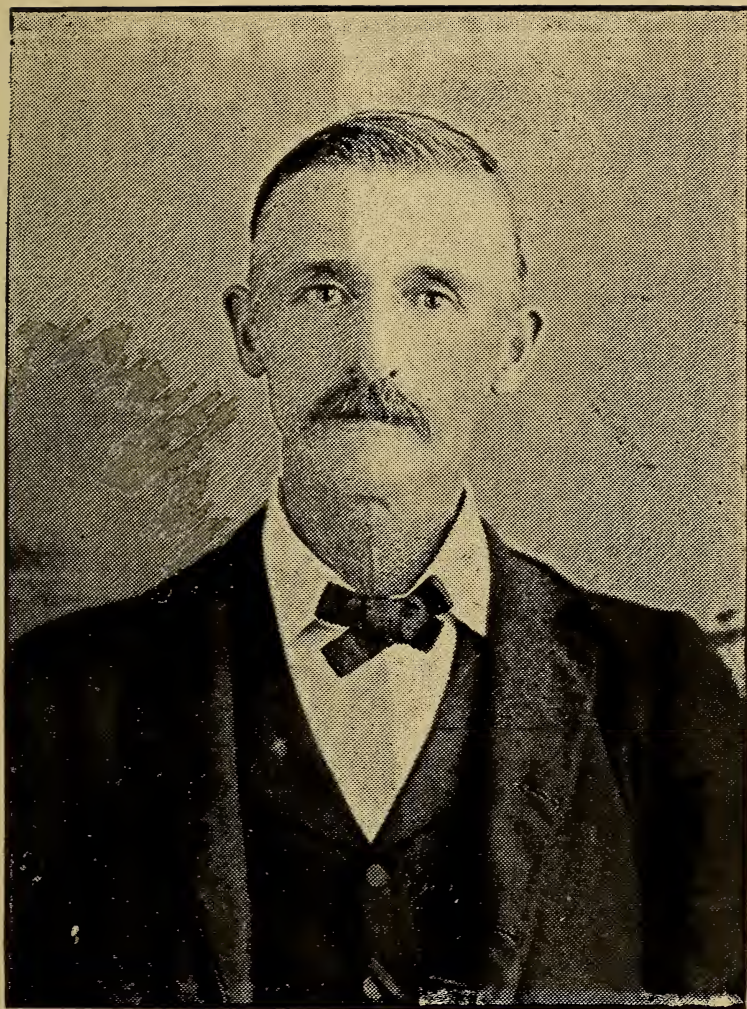
The committee appointed to investigate the colored churches, in conference in their association, reported that they considered them orthodox; but, owing to one of their churches calling a pastor, who had been ex-

cluded from the church at Tom's Creek, they were in disorder. Another committee was appointed to visit him and admonish him to go to Tom's Creek church and make satisfaction.

Correspondents were appointed to visit Abbott's Creek, Mayo, Smith's River, New River, Roaring River, White Oak and Mountain associations. Also minutes were ordered to be sent to Mill Branch, Little River and Kehukee associations. We also note that 70 members had been baptized during the past year. Twelve members died and three had been excluded.

A resolution was passed to dispense with the spring term of the association, and the churches requested to express in their next letters to the association whether they were in favor of Section Meetings or not.

The association next met with the newly constituted church at Rockhouse, Oct. 24, 1890. Most of the churches were represented, and correspondents were present from Country Line, Smith's River, Mayo and the



ELDER W. H. ATKINSON, MEMBER OF THE
COMMITTEE ON HISTORY,
ARARAT, N. C.

Mountain. Twenty-eight members had been received by experience and baptism; four were restored to fellowship; thirteen had died and twelve had been excluded. The ordination of G. O. Key and Wm. H. Atkinson to the office of elder, in the church at Union, was reported. The name of Senter church had been changed to Liberty, because of the moving of the church to a new place of worship by that name.

A large majority of the churches opposed Section Meetings, and asked for two Associations a year.

The committee appointed to visit the colored preacher reported him still in disorder. The association, therefore, agreed to drop the matter, and have nothing more to do with them until they get themselves in order. Correspondents were appointed to each of the associations with which the association was corresponding.

The next session was held with the church at Fisher's River. All the churches were represented, except White Oak Spring, which had been

growing weaker for some time. A presbytery was called; and, finding only ten members, it was agreed that the church dissolve. Five of the members took letters and joined at Stuart's Creek, and the other five at Tom's Creek. The church at Zion Hill was received by letter from the Mountain Association. A large correspondence was present and seated.

The ordination of Wm. M. Stone and Jesse A. Ashburn to the office of elder, in the church at Ararat, was reported.

The association advised all the churches of the association to deal strictly with any and all members who may engage in violations of the law, either by blockading or otherwise, and to exclude any and all who persist in the same.

On October 23, 1891, the association convened with the church at Deep Creek. All the churches, 19 in number, were represented. Also the church at Mulberry was received by letter from the Mountain Association. Correspondents and visitors were received and seated from Ab-

bott's Creek, Smith's River, New River, Roaring River and Mountain Associations. Correspondents were appointed to the same and, also, to Senter and Country Line Associations. The baptism of 16 members and the death of 12 members was reported. Also the ordination of R. R. Key to the office of elder, in the church at Ararat, was reported. One thousand minutes were ordered printed for distribution among the churches and associations.

The next session was held with the church at Zion Hill, April, 22, 1892. All the churches, except Tom's Creek, were represented. Visitors from Mayo, New River, Washington, Silver Creek, Black Creek and Mountain Associations were present and seated. The churches all appeared to be in peace, and love was manifested as existing among the sister associations generally. The presence of Eld. P. D. Gold, from Black Creek Association, was much appreciated by the association, it being his first visit, and having come so great a distance.

The association again took occasion

to advise the churches to deal with all members who refuse to pay just debts, or who violate the law in any way.

Tom's Creek was the next church to be honored with the association, which convened October 21st, 1892. All of the 20 churches were represented. Correspondents and visitors were present and seated in council from Abbot's Creek, Mayo, Smith's River, New River, Country Line, Washington (visitor only) and the Mountain Associations, and minutes from Senter. The statistics showed the baptism of 37 members and the death of 18 members.

The association appointed a committee to visit Roaring River Association and notify her that the association was aggrieved on the account of the conduct of Eld. W. R. Welbourn, an elder in one of the churches composing that body.

At the next session of the association, which was held with the church at Flower Gap, April 21, 1893, all the churches were represented by delegates, except three, Cody's Creek,

Deep Creek and Liberty. Eld. Isaac Jones, from White Oak, and Eld. P. D. Gold, from Black Creek Associations, were present and seated as visitors. As correspondents, we note with pleasure the presence of Elder P. W. Williard, from Abbott's Creek; Eld. J. D. Vass, from the Mountain; and Eld. James M Allen, from New River.

A query was presented by the church at Franklin, to wit:

"Has a church the right to receive members, while two of their members are in confusion?" Answer: "Yes, provided those members, who are in confusion, be first silenced."

Another query was presented as follows: "What is the result of original sin on Adam's posterity?" On this query there was quite a discussion, in which Elders Jones and Gold took part, by the request of the association. The answer given was as follows: "It brought death, natural and eternal."

The next session of the association was held with the church at Flat Top or Franklin, October 20, 1893.

Delegates representing all the churches, 20 in number, were present and seated. Also a newly constituted church, Dover by name, and located near White Plains, N. C., was admitted, or received as a part of the association. Also corresponding brethren were received from Roaring River, Senter, Mayo and Mountain Associations; and visitors from Union Association, in Ky., and Bear Creek Association, in N. C. These were all seated in council. The statistics show that 27 had been baptized, 14 had died, making the total membership of all the churches now about 730. There were then 17 elders and 21 churches.

The committee appointed to confer with Roaring River, in regard to the case of Elder Welbourn, had failed to attend; and the association finding her mistake in attempting to confer with Roaring River Association instead of Elder Welbourn himself, asked pardon for what she had done, and advised all parties aggrieved with Elder Welbourn to go to him and labor for reconciliation accord-

ing to the word of God.

April 20th, 1894, was the date of the next session, which convened with the church at liberty. All the churches sent delegates which were seated. Also visitors and correspondents from Mayo, White Oak and Mountain Associations were present and seated.

The ordination of H. D. Mickey to the office of elder, in the church at Volunteer, was reported. The churches of the association were advised to look after their licensed ministers, who were not preaching, and call in their license; and to permit none to preach without license, except in the bounds of their own church, or in the presence of ordained authority. A presbytery was appointed for the purpose of ordaining Abram King (col.) at Tom's Creek, if found orthodox.

On Oct. 26, 1894 the association convened with the church at Dover. All the churches except Cody's Creek were represented; also correspondents from Mayo, Smith's River, Roaring River, Country Line and Mountain

Associations were received and seated.

The statistics showed that 80 members had been baptized during the past year. Some had been received by letters of dismission from other associations; but 23 had died, leaving the total membership now about 800.

The presbytery appointed to Tom's Creek reported that they found Abram King unsound in the faith and did not ordain him.

A letter was presented from a body of Baptists known as the "Parker Faction," of Little River Association. In answer to which the association made the following reply: "We are not in the seat of judgment, but will say to you, that we learn that the different associations of that country were in council when you were 'disowned, and we cannot disregard their decision; but say to you, Labor in a gospel way for fellowship, and we think peace will be restored."

On April 26, 1895, the association convened with Ararat church, at Cedar Hill meetinghouse, the new place of worship adopted by said church.

All the churches were represented except Cody's Creek and Dover. Corresponding elders and brethren were received and seated from Mayo, and Elder Isaac Jones visitor from White Oak Association.

A new church by the name of Mountain View was received into the association. The constitution of the new church, above named, and the ordination of Tyler Gates to the office of deacon, was reported. The news of the deaths of Elder Wm. B. Gates, Elder C. Blackburn, and Deacon Orvil Hawks was sorrowfully received.

A committee was appointed to visit the church at Cody's Creek and dissolve it by giving to each of the members a letter of dismissal, or give such advice to them as they may find necessary. On Saturday and Sunday the congregation was unusually large and the preaching very impressive.

The fall session was held with the Church at Round Peak, Oct. 25, 1895. All the churches (21 in number) were represented; also correspondents and

visitors were received from Mayo, New River, Mountain, Roaring River, Senter and Union. The last two were represented only by visitors. And a file of minutes was received from each of the following associations: Little River, Abbott's Creek, Kehukee, Staunton River, Country Line, Senter, Ketocton and Ebenezer. The statistics show an increase of 20 members. Fifty-three had been received, but 33 had died or had been excluded. Elder Harbour was again moderator and Elder A. M. Denny clerk.

The committee to Cody's Creek reported the dissolving of the said church, and the reception of its members by the church at Liberty. The name of the church at Cody's Creek was ordered to be dropped from the minutes.

Roaring River Association complained that the church at Mulberry had refused to grant letters of dismission to a number of members of said church (Mulberry) because said members wished to join a church, or churches in Roaring River Associa-

tion. And this association replied: "We did not refuse to give those members letters of dismissal owing to their intention to join your association, but on account of them being in disorder." There had for sometime been complaints against W. R. Welbourn; that in his autobiography he had misrepresented the facts. Some of the members of the church at Mulberry claimed to know this to be true, and desired that Elder Welbourn should be dealt with for such misrepresentations. The matter had been before this association before and the aggrieved parties were advised to go to him, or to his home church with their complaint. This they had done, they said, and his church refused to hear the charges.

The church at Ararat presented a query to this association, asking if it was gospel order to receive and seat members of the church or churches, refusing to hear the charges against Elder Welbourn. The answer of the association was, "No."

Correspondents were appointed to Mayo, Smith's River, New River,

Senter, Roaring River, Country Line and Mountain Associations; also agreed to send a file of minutes to Little River, Kehukee, White Oak, and Mill Branch Associations. No correspondence was taken up with Ketocton and Ebenezer, owing to the distance and want of knowledge of their faith and order.

Elk Spur church, in Carroll Co., Va., was next to entertain the association, which she did, April 26, 1896.

Each of the churches sent delegates, except Fisher's Gap, Rock Spring and Deep Creek. There had been a new church organized at Martin, in Va., which was admitted into the association.

Correspondents were received and seated from Mayo, Smith's River, New River and Mountain Associations; also Elder P. D. Gold, from Black Creek, and Elder Isaac Jones, from White Oak, as visitors. There was very little business done; but quite a large congregation was present, and the preaching was received with much joy.

The church at Volunteer, Stokes

Co., N. C., was given the presence of the next session of the association, which convened October 23, 1896.

Correspondents from Mayo, Senter and Mountain Associations, and two visitors (Elders M. B. and W. D. Martin, from Union Association in Ky.) met with delegates from every church in the association. Elder Harbour was again made moderator, and Elder Denny clerk.

The death of Elders Russell R. Key and Nathan Alberty, also of Deacon R. P. Philips, was received with sorrow.

Correspondents were appointed to Roaring River, Smith's River, New River, Mayo and Mountain Associations, and a file of minutes ordered to be sent to Abbott's Creek, Little River, Kehukee, Mill Branch, Senter and Country Line Associations.

During the past year, quite a number of members of different churches had died. We note the death of five in the church at Ararat.

On the 23rd day of April, 1897, the association met with the church at Hogan's Creek. With the excep-

tion of Martin, Mountain View and Round Peak, all the churches sent delegates. A new church had been constituted at Pilot Mountain, which was received into the association and its delegates seated. Elder J. A. Burch was seated as correspondent, from Country Line. Elder P. D. Gold, from Black Creek, and Elder E. E. Lundy, from the Mountain, were seated as visitors. The death of two very efficient deacons, F. M. McCraw and J. M. Gordon was sorrowfully received.

A delegation was appointed to visit Roaring River Association and to bear a letter of complaint to her, as follows: "We prefer the following charges against the Roaring River church, in the Roaring River Association: We, the Fisher's River Association, now in session at Hogan's Creek, Surry Co., N. C., April 24th, 1897, do say to our sister, the Roaring River Association, that we humbly ask your honorable body to notice the disorder of Roaring River church and deal with her properly for disregarding the testimony of

some of our brethren and sisters, to wit: Elders C. B. Denny, A. C. Woodruff and J. M. Wyatt, and brethren S. B. Jones, Russell Draughn, Marion Welbourn, T. P. Nixon and B. F. Absher; and sisters Nancy E. Philips, S. E. Beemer and S. A. Cockerham, and sustaining Elder W. R. Welbourn in the face of their testimony. And we appoint Elders M. G. Harbour and Gabriel Denny; also Wm. Golding to go with our regular correspondents. Elders G. O. Key, C. B. Denny and J. D. Draughn to the next session of the said Roaring River Association and labor to perpetuate peace and fellowship, and that these brethren whose testimony was discarded go and be with them." This concluded the work of the association at this session.

On the 22nd day of October, the association convened with the church at State Road. Delegates representing all the churches (23 in number) met with correspondents from Mayo, New River, Roaring River, Country Line, Senter and Mountain Associations, and Elder Z. T. Turner, from

Pig River, and Elders M. B. Martin and Robert Honaker, from Washington Association. The statistics show but little change in numbers during the past year

Correspondents were appointed to Mayo, Smith's River, New River, Senter and Mountain Associations: also a file of minutes sent to each of the following associations, to wit: Kehukee, Abbott's Creek, White Oak, Mill Branch, Pig River, Staunton River, Ebenezer and Ketocton.

The correspondents and committee appointed to visit the Roaring River Association reported that they were seated in that association, but that their testimony was disregarded and the letter not satisfactorily answered. We have not a copy of the letter, written by Roaring River, but if we can obtain a copy, it will appear in this volume. The reply to the letter was as follows: "We therefore, in consideration of the testimony of those brethren who were appointed to visit you at your last association, sustain our brethren and believe their testimony; and we believe they

have been treated in a very unchristian manner by Eld. W. R. Welbourn, and also by Roaring River church; and we, therefore, declare nonfellowship with Elder Welbourn; also, with Roaring River church for holding him and disregarding the testimony of our brethren. And we agree, also, to withhold the appointing of correspondents to your body until you exonerate our brethren from all things in which they are wrongfully accused. We also agree that a copy of this letter be published in Zion's Landmark, and, also, in the Alleghany Star."

The association also gave the churches the following praise-worthy advice: "We advise the churches of this association not to receive nor to hold any member or members, who are not of good moral character."

There had been, just previous to this time, much caviling over the duty of the laity as regards giving of their substance to those engaged in the ministry, not, however, that the laity of this association was burdened or attempted to be, as was before

stated, somewhere in this work; but as the matter had been, more or less, discussed, this body took occasion to place itself on record, with the following words: "Agreed that the assistance to ministers should be given under the nature of 'Benevolence,' and not as a debt."

After preaching to the usual large congregation the association adjourned.

On the 22nd day of April, 1898, the association was held with the church at Stuart's Creek, one mile from Mt. Airy, N. C. Delegates representing each of the churches were present.

Correspondents from Mayo, New River, and the Mountain were present and seated; also Elder P. D. Gold, from Black Creek and Elder James A. Burch, from Country Line, were seated as visitors. We might here state that visiting elders and brethren were accorded the same liberties and courtesies as correspondents.

Elder Harbour was again moderator and Elder A. M. Denny clerk. No business except the regular reading of the Rules of Decorum, Arti-

cles of Faith, Covenant, etc., and the usual adopting of a resolution of thanks to the citizens of the community for their hospitality.

Perhaps it would interest the reader to give here a few of the customs of the citizens of the country in which this Association is situated. Most of the citizens are farmers, owning small farms which they cultivate with one or two horses, sometimes more; but not as a rule. They are, for the most part, very hospitable, and when the association is to be held in a community, almost every one prepares to entertain company. This is done without cost to the guest. The entertaining is not confined to the Primitive Baptists alone, but citizens of the various, different religious persuasions, often open their doors and give a public invitation to the delegates and visitors to these associations. As a rule, there is much pride taken in hospitality.

The next annual session of the association was held with the church at Martin, in Carroll County, Virginia, October 21, 1898.

There were six churches whose delegates failed to attend, to wit: Rock Spring, Fisher's Gap, Fisher's River, Hogan's Creek, Deep Creek and Mountain View. The other 17 churches were represented. Correspondents from Mayo, New River, Smith's River and Mountain were received and seated. Also Elder Isaac Jones, from White Oak, and Eld. J. D. Rife, of Mate's Creek, Pike County, Ky., were seated as visitors. And correspondents were appointed to Mayo, Smith's River, New River, Senter, Mate's Creek and Mountain.

Statistics showed but little change in numbers.

The next meeting was with the church in the town of Pilot Mountain, N. C., and convened on April 21, 1899. Every church except Rock Spring was represented by delegates who met with correspondents from Mayo, Smith's River, New River and the Mountain Associations, also Eld. A. J. Taylor, from Senter, Eld. P. D. Gold, from Black Creek, and Elder Isaac Jones, from White Oak, all of whom were seated in fellowship.

There was an unusually large congregation of people assembled together there on account of this meeting, so much so that the very large building belonging to the Primitive Baptists was not adequate. But through the courtesy of the Missionary Baptists their building was also filled, and yet a large number of people failed to get to hear the preaching, for the want of room.

Very little business claimed the attention of the body, which adjourned after a short session. The preaching was quite able and very effective.

On Oct. 20, of same year, the association convened with the church at Mulberry. Delegates from all the churches met with correspondents from Mayo and Mountain Associations. Also Eld. Levi I. Bodenheimer, of Mayo, and Eld. Richard Fender, of Senter, were present and seated in the association.

A letter was presented by delegates representing a newly constituted church at Albion; but, instead of receiving the church at once, as had been the custom in most of the pre-

vious cases, the letter was referred to the committee having the arrangement of the other business in charge. The cause was this: In other instances churches had grown up from an arm, set off by some other church; and, when a sufficient number had become members, the association had appointed a presbytery of elders to examine and constitute them into a church. In this case it was different. There was no church-house at Albion, and the people wished to build one and built it at once. They also wished the title of the land composing the site to be vested in the proper trustees: and, under this consideration, by the request of eight or ten members, the church at Tom's Creek granted letters to the said members and requested elders from other churches to meet them at Albion, and constitute them into a church, which they did. After the matter had been explained to the committee, and they had made their report, the church was received and became a part of the association. Their Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum

being the same as herein written.

The statistics showed some increase in the number of members.

Roaring River Association had sent a letter to the association accompanied by the record of the trial of Elder W. R. Welbourn, by the Roaring River church, which trial purported to have been held in December, 1896. In answer to which this body replied: "We say that as the association has not as yet exhonored our brethren from the burden imposed upon them, therefore, we still require it of them."

The association appointed correspondents to Mayo, Smith's River, New River, Senter and Mountain.

With Elder Harbour moderator and Elder A. M. Denny clerk the association adjourned.

On April 20, 1900, the association convened with the church at Union; all the churches, except Fisher's River, were represented by delegates, it sending a letter. No correspondents were present, except one from Mayo. Elder P. D. Gold was present and seated as a visitor from Black Creek.

A newly constituted church by the name of Little Vine was admitted into the association as a part of the same.

The news of the death of Elder A. Z. Philips, and of Deacon Turner Pilson was heard with much sorrow.

The preaching was, apparently, well received, and the association adjourned to meet with the church at Albion.

This meeting occurred October 26, 1900. Delegates representing each of the 25 churches met with correspondents from Mayo, Smith's River, Senter and Mountain. Elders Harbour and Denny were made moderator and clerk. From the time of the organization of this Association, in 1832, until the present, there was a clause in their Articles of Faith which read, "We believe that God created all things, sin excepted." Several of the leading ministers in the Association often contended that sin was not a "*thing*," but an act of disobedience on the part of man, and the mentioning of it, in connection with creation, was superfluous. So

the association appointed a committee consisting of Elders A. M. Denny, M. G. Harbour and C. B. Denny to revise this article and make some minor changes in the phraseology in the Articles of Faith, but none of which, however, changed the real meaning.

The following query, from Flower Gap, was presented: "Is it gospel order to give letters of dismissal for any other cause than that of convenience? and what is meant by the word "*convenience*?" Answer: "We advise that it is not, unless a good and justified reason be given; and in no case should letters of dismissal be given to members who are not in good standing, and in full fellowship; and we advise further, that if any church of our body has given letters contrary to the tenor of this advice, that they revoke them."

This query, doubtless, was prompted by the fact that Elder James M. Wyatt had procured a letter from the church at State Road while he was not in full fellowship with the brethren generally—a crime had

been charged and not fully investigated—and had joined a church in a different association, and not convenient to his home.

The association then appointed correspondents to Senter, New River, Smith's River, Mayo, Country Line, Abbott's Creek and Mountain.

The news of the death of Deacon Jackson Norman was sorrowfully received by the association.

The congregation was exceedingly large, and, considering its size, very orderly. Services were held on Sunday, both in the house and at a pulpit erected in the grove. The preaching was very impressive, and often spoken of afterward.

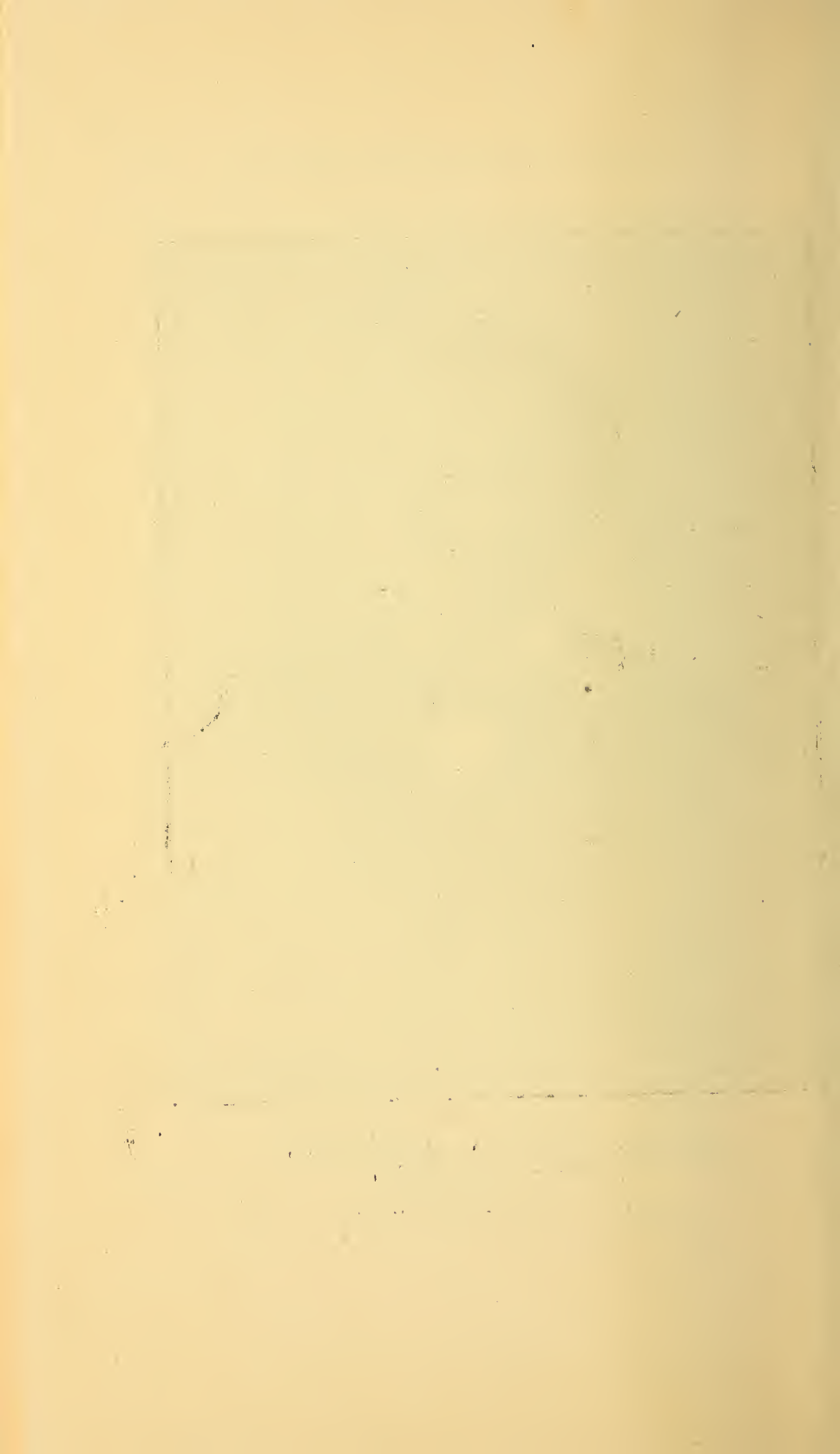
The association adjourned to meet at Little Vine, one and one-half miles west of Dobson, N. C.; which meeting was held on April 26, 1901. Each of the churches was represented by delegates. There were no correspondents from other associations.

The ordination of Garland Allen to the office of elder, in the church at Elk Spur, was reported.

Ever since the publication of Has-



ELDER JESSE A. ASHBURN,
(*Author of this Book.*)
PILOT MOUNTAIN, N. C.



sell's Church History, there had been a growing restlessness on the part of some of the members of some of the churches in this Association, among whom was the writer of this work. This restlessness, doubtless, was caused by the fact that Hassell's History did not contain even a sketch of this body. This omission, however, was not due to negligence on the part of Elder Hassell, for he used due diligence in trying to get the necessary information, and sent blanks for that purpose to some party or parties, in this Association; but the party or parties to whom they were sent, for some reason, failed to fill out and return them. For this reason the sketch was omitted. The author and others, after talking the matter over, decided that it would be wise to preserve the memory of this body and its early records by a small history.

After the matter was discussed in the association, the body appointed a committee of elders, M. G. Harbour, A. M. Denny, W. H. Atkinson, C. B. Denny and J. D. Draughn to act with the author in the preparation and

verifying of this work.

We here append a note appearing in the records of this meeting. "This association, or meeting, was remarkable in two respects: (1) The entire absence of correspondents; and (2) The wonderful manifestation of fellowship, union and love among the brethren."

The next session of the association was held with the church at Rockhouse, in Stokes Co., N. C., October 25, 1901. The churches, 25 in number, were all represented by delegates, except Hogan's Creek, Rock Spring, and Franklin.

The statistics showed a small increase in the entire membership of the churches which, at this time, aggregated about 850 members.

Correspondents were present and seated from each of the following associations: Mayo, Smith's River and Mountain. Elders Harbour and Denny were again elected moderator and Clerk. The ordination of J. H. Wood to the office of deacon, in the church at Little Vine, and Charlie Hawks and J. H. McCraw to the

same office, in the church at Flower Gap, was reported to the association.

Inquiry was made as to the progress of this work of preparing this volume. A favorable report was made, expressing a hope of its completion in about one year.

Correspondents were appointed to Mayo, Smith's River, New River and Mountain associations; and agreed to send minutes to Abbott's Creek, Country Line, Senter, Eno, Little River, Black Creek, Contentnea, Kehukee, White Oak, Mill Branch, Pig River and Staunton River Associations.

Elder J. M. Wyatt, formerly a member of the church at State Road and resident of Surry Co., N. C.; but now a citizen of Pike Co., Ky., had been charged with some disorderly conduct, in the western part of Va., or eastern part of Ky. State Road church had tried to get the facts in the case, but, so far, had failed; and before full satisfaction was reached in the matter, a part of the church granted him a letter or certificate of fellowship, which he carried away

with him when he moved his family to Kentucky. We learned that he joined a church there, placing this letter with the church. As there was dissatisfaction at both places about the matter, the church at State Road was advised, by the association, to revoke said letter.

The association again took occasion to remind the Roaring River Association of her disorder in associating with, or holding to Roaring River and Pilgrim's Rest churches: they having refused to deal with Elder Wm. R. Welbourn for false representations in his autobiography, and also for his bold and unwarranted attack on this Association, and especially on Elder C. B. Denny. The following resolution was adopted. "Whereas Eld. W. R. Welbourn, of the Roaring River Association, published this, the Fisher's River Association, in the Standard of Truth as being an Arminian body, full of heresy and disorders, and has otherwise made charges against Eld. C. B. Denny, and others of our brethren, which we know to be false; and

in consideration of the Pilgrim's Rest church receiving and yet holding members who stand legally excluded from Mulberry church; and, also, holding a record charging said church with disorderly government, and making other charges against Elder C. B. Denny, the pastor of said church, for preaching Arminianism and the things of which we hereby declare he is not guilty; and seeing further that Roaring River Association still sustains Elder W. R. Welbourn and Pilgrim's Rest church, in said disorder: We, therefore, declare nonfellowship with said Roaring River Association, and we further ask our general correspondence to consider the general disorder of that Association."

On April 25, 1902, the association met with the church at Fisher's Gap; in the county of Surry, N. C. Delegates from each of 25 churches were present. While no corresponding delegates were present, yet several visitors were there. Among them were Elder J. D. Vass, C. L. Carr, J. M. Dickey, and B. Rector; also a file

of minutes from each of White Oak, Kehukee, Mountain, and Abbott's Creek Associations. Elder Harbour was again made moderator, and C. F. Denny clerk.

A letter of correspondence was received from Senter Association, and correspondence opened by seating her delegates in the council.

The ordination of J. L. Pyrtle to the office of elder, in the church at Volunteer, was reported.

State Road church had been, for some time, having trouble with Eld. Wyatt, of said church, and who had recently moved near Peter's Creek church, in Pike Co., Ky. Some charges were made against him in Virginia. He had denied the charges at home, but it seems that he now confesses them. His being so great a distance from them, and the church not being very strong, it sought advice of the Association. This she gave as follows: "We, as the Association in council, advise State Road church to answer certain questions in regard to the conduct of Elder J. M. Wyatt, and to say to Peter's Creek

church that we accept his confessions to the several charges against him in Virginia, but we still hold him in bonds for his false statements, made to us in denying to us the charges which he now confesses to be true."

Letters of dismissal were granted to the churches at Martin, Zion Hill, Flower Gap, Elk Spur, and Round Peak; and these churches, uniting with five churches from the Mountain Association, formed a new Association, called Zion.

Elder Harbour served as moderator and C. F. Denny as clerk.

The next session of the Association was held with the church at Fisher's River, October 26, 1902. Delegates from all (20) the churches met with correspondents and visitors, as follows: from Mayo, John Burgess and F. G. Southern; New River, Elder D. S. Webb; Senter, J. A. Cave, Elisha Roup, and Eli Long.

Zion, the new Association, sent a letter asking for correspondence; and the correspondence being agreed to, her delegates, W. D. Vaughn and Charlie W. Hawks, were seated in

the council.

The statistics, prior to the forming of the new Association, showed the number of members to be about 840.

The number of churches was 25, and the number of ordained ministers seventeen. The general condition of the churches was better than at any time during the history of the Association.

Correspondents were appointed to Mayo, Smith's River, New River, the Mountain, Zion, Senter, Abbott's Creek, and Eno.

The Association agreed to drop the spring term and to hold but one Association each year.

The Association received with sorrow the news of the death of Elder A. C. Woodruff, of the church at Rock Spring.

The Association next met with the church at Deep Creek, in Yadkin Co., N. C., October 23, 1903; and after the usual reading of letters from each of 19 churches (Rock Spring having dissolved, and her members taking letters and joining elsewhere), delegates from 18 churches were organized by

electing Elder M. G. Harbour moderator, and Elder A. M. Denny clerk.

Correspondents reported as follows: From New River, Elders D. S. Webb and F. P. Branscome; Abbott's Creek, Elder P. W. Williard; Senter, Elder John A. Cave. Brother James M. Crews was seated, as a visitor, from Mayo.

Correspondents were appointed to Abbott's Creek, Mayo, Smith's River, New River, Senter, Zion and Mountain, and a file of minutes sent as usual.

There was nothing of unusual interest, except some excitement over the question of "Treasuries in the Churches;" and, as is often the case, when a trouble arises, many had been misinformed on the matter, and which led to the following query (by the Committee on Arrangements): "Is it gospel order for a minister to agitate an evil which may or may not exist in a brother, or a church, until he has investigated the matter and has labored for reconciliation? Answer; No."

This query had a good effect by

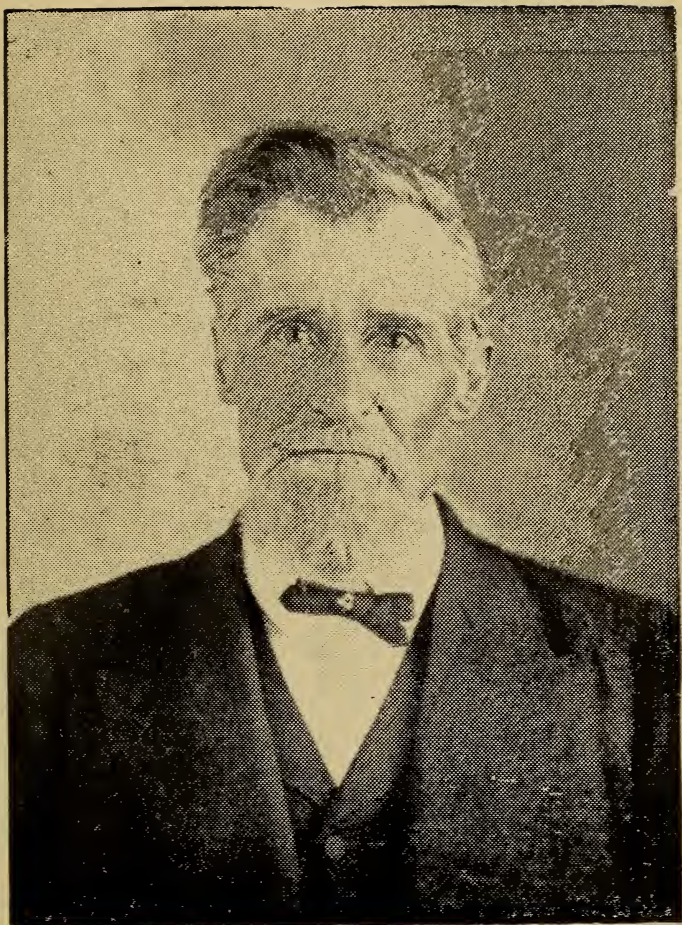
calling the attention of the brethren to the evil of circulating rumors to the hurt of others.

The Association then adjourned to meet with the church at Mountain View in 1904.

The Association met according to adjournment, October 21, 1904. All the churches (19 in number) sent letters; and all, except Hogan's Creek, sent delegates. Elder Harbour, the aged moderator, not being present, the Association organized by electing Elder A. M. Denny, the former clerk, moderator, and the author of this work as clerk.

Correspondents were received as follows: From Zion Association, Eld. Wesley Brindle and J. C. McCraw; Mayo, Elder E. M. Barnard and Jesse Beasley; Smith's River, W. S. Lawson and Hiram Thompson (visitors); New River, W. F. Harris and J. Dehart(visitors).

Saturday morning, Elder Harbour arrived and informed the Association that he had been detained by the death and burial of his sister. He also tendered his resignation as mod-



ELDER A. M. DENNY, PRESENT MODERATOR OF THE ASSOCIATION AND ALSO A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORY.

erator, on account of his declining age. He had served the body quite faithfully for 27 years. The Association accepted his resignation and tendered him a resolution of thanks for his faithful and impartial service. He was also seated in council, as a delegate from his (Union) church.

A resolution was also passed, seating all the ordained ministers belonging to this Association in this body, now, as well as in the future.

After the usual appointing of correspondents, arranging for the distribution of minutes etc., the Association adjourned to meet with the church at Tom's Creek.

On pages 126 and 127 will be seen the Statistical Table for the year 1904, and a list of the ministers belonging to this body at the present, October 22, 1904.



ORDAINED MINISTERS.

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| A. M. Denny, | ----- | Pinnacle, | N. C. |
| C. B. Denny, | ----- | Pinnacle, | N. C. |
| Gabriel Denny, | ---- | Pinnacle, | N. C. |
| Wm. M. Stone, | ---- | Pinnacle, | N. C. |
| H. D. Mickey, | ---- | Pinnacle, | N. C. |
| Henderson Cain, | | Pilot M't'n, | N. C. |
| J. A. Ashburn, | | Pilot M't'n, | N. C. |
| W. H. Atkinson, | ---- | Ararat, | N. C. |
| M. G. Harbour, | ----- | Moser, | N. C. |
| J. D. Draughn, | | White Plains, | N. C. |
| G. O. Key, | | Pilot Mountain, | N. C. |
| J. M. Royal, | --- | Roaring Gap, | N. C. |
| J. H. Moran, | ---- | Dan River, | N. C. |
| J. L. Pyrtle, | ----- | Big Creek, | N. C. |

LICENSED MINISTERS.

| | | | |
|--------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| C. F. Denny, | ---- | Greensboro, | N. C. |
| O. J. Denny, | ---- | Greensboro, | N. C. |
| F. P. Stone, | ----- | Francisco, | N. C. |
| J. W. Creed, | ----- | Samuel, | N. C. |
| C. Lundy, | ----- | Low Gap, | N. C. |

MANNER OF WORSHIP.

On assembling at the Churchhouse for the purpose of public worship, the congregation usually engages in singing a hymn or two before the preacher engages the congregation. Then the preacher usually reads his hymn—most likely one of his own choosing. After the hymn is sung, (no organ or other instrument being used) the minister usually leads in public prayer. Sometimes, though not always, another hymn is sung. Then the preacher announces his text if he uses one, and the sermon follows. The preaching is always “*impromptu*” or “*extemporaneous*,” that is, without notes or previous meditation. The preacher is most generally very apt in quoting the scripture, it being almost the only book he peruses. It is wonderful, if not mysterious, to see how he will link each passage of scripture with the experience of the Christian. Sometimes he almost bursts forth in grief, as he relates the trouble of poor sinners on account of

their sins; but, perhaps, in a very short period of time, he is filled with rejoicing, as he tells how Jesus took away their sins, washing them with his own blood.

Sometimes as many as two, or even three, preachers will preach in succession during the same meeting. Most usually there is a hymn sung between each two sermons. When the preaching is concluded, if there is to be no conference, the congregation sings a hymn, and, very often, spends a few minutes in shaking hands with each other. Then a benediction closes the services.

Each of the churches has a two-days meeting each month, called a "Church Meeting." This meeting occupies Saturday and Sunday. The services usually begin about eleven o'clock each day. After the preaching on Saturday, and before the benediction, the church has conference, which will be described on the next page.

At these monthly or church meetings are frequently several ministers, part of whom preach on Saturday

and the others on Sunday. Sometimes, however, only two or three preachers will be present, and both, or all, will preach each day. But in some instances there is but one preacher who does the preaching for both days.

THE CHURCH CONFERENCE.

On the Saturday of each church meeting, after the preaching service is over, the pastor (who is always an elder), or in the absence of the pastor, some elder present, on whom the church calls, or in the absence of any ordained minister, the deacon of the church calls the members of the church together, that is, requests them to sit as near in a body as may be; also the members of the churches of like faith are invited to seats with them. When all are seated in a body ready for the transaction of business, the pastor, elder or deacon presiding, is called "Brother Moderator," and is the presiding officer of the meeting. He first inquires of the body if fellowship exists among all the members. This is a very solemn question,

as it strictly means Christian love, unity and harmony among all the members. If there is not full fellowship, to sit still, in such condition, is fully considered lying, and this is quite a base crime in the mind of a Primitive Baptist. But, on the other hand, to state a nonfellowship is to bring trouble into the church, and so many of the members between these two difficulties ponder fully in their minds the consequences; and, at last, rather than have trouble in the church, decide it is better to bear the wrong; and, finally, they are blest with the spirit of forgiveness, and decide to forgive the offense. But if some member has so hurt or trespassed against another that he can not let the matter pass, then it is mentioned in the church; but the church never acts on the matter until she ascertains whether or not the plaintiff in the case has taken gospel steps. This will be more fully dwelt upon under the head of "Dealing with Offenders."

After the church is found to be in fellowship, or after the matter of fel-

lowship is settled, either by putting the offending party or parties under dealings, or disposing of the matter in some other lawful manner, the presiding officer calls for "Reference" from preceeding meetings. This often brings up some case of "offense" or "trespass," or "sin against the church;" all these must, according to the rule of practice, be settled, either by referring it to some future meeting, and the offending party or parties "held under dealings," or by forgiveness or exclusion. Then any other business of the church is transacted; and lastly, manifest that the door of the church is open, as it is called, for the reception of members. This does not mean that the door of the church was closed during conference, for the Primitive Baptists transact no business behind closed doors; but it means that an invitation is given to persons present, who are not members of the church, to come forward and express a desire to become members. But this will be more fully treated under the head of "Reception of Members."

After the opening of the door, as it is called, if none come forward to join, or if any person or persons join, then the services are closed by singing and the benediction.

DEALING WITH OFFENDERS.

This subject is one that has caused a great deal of study, as well as a great deal of trouble for the elders of this body, not so much how to deal with the offender, but how to determine or judge between public and private wrongs. The scripture, they say, is plain how to deal with a "trespass," and how to deal with an "offense;" how to deal with a member for a trespass upon a brother or against a brother; and it is a time honored, as well as a scriptural rule not to hear a charge of trespass against a brother until the party trespassed against shall first go alone to the party trespassing and tell him of his fault and try and settle; and, failing to do so, he takes one or two with him, goes a second time, and again tries to settle the matter. If he fails this time, then he brings the matter

to the church and the church settles it, either by causing the parties to be reconciled to each other or by excluding one or both.

But they do not deal with an offense against the church; such as, drunkenness, idolatry, lying, or a general course of such conduct as the church considers hurtful to the cause, in the same way as they do a private wrong or trespass. In these public wrongs, the deacon of the church usually notifies the church of the wrong. The deacons sometimes attempt to get the offending party to forsake the error of his way. The church then usually appoints a committee or instructs the deacons to visit the offender and ask him to attend the church meeting and give satisfaction. When he comes to the church, if he satisfies the church that he has repented or is repentant, the church forgives him, and admonishes him to forsake the error of his way; but if he persists in his disorderly course or refuses to come to the church, he is excluded. The crimes for which members are excluded are,

all violations of the laws of the state or nation, lying, drunkenness, refusing to pay honest debts. joining Secret Societies of any kind, engaging in myrth, such as dances or revelries, and for idolatry. They are very strict as regards the payment of just debts; also regarding truth and honesty.

RECEPTION OF MEMBERS.

Almost always before conference closes the door of the church is manifest as being open for the reception of members. There are three ways in which a person may become a member of their body. (1) by experience and baptism; (2) by letter of dismission from another church of the same faith and order; and, (3) by reconciliation. In the first mode of reception the candidate comes forward and either gives the minister his hand, or states that he desires to talk with the church. Almost always the candidate manifests much fear and trembling, deploring the idea of hypocrisy; and manifesting, by his looks, that earnest desire of

heart for purity. He is then invited by the minister to be seated, when he is requested to state some of the dealings of the Lord with him. He will most generally state his deep conviction of heart and mind, because of his sins; and tells of his cries and supplications to God for his mercy; of the manifestation of the grace of God in the pardon of his sins; of occasional blessings with the presence of his glory; and, lastly, of his love for the church, and his desire to walk in the footsteps of the Savior, obeying his commandments. After he is through relating his experience, the presiding officer, or minister, asks the church if any one desires to ask any questions. If he has been clear on all the points above named, there are but few, if any, questions asked him. If the church has failed to get full satisfaction of his true conviction, several questions are asked in order to draw him out fully, so that full fellowship may exist.

Christian fellowship is the one great object of the church, and they claim that without it no church can

prosper, therefore no person is received until the church is fully satisfied that the candidate is sincere in his effort to become a member. When the minister, or presiding officer, finds that no further questions are to be asked, he takes the vote of the body or church, thus: "All who receive this person as a member of this body, with all its privileges, will hold up your right hands." If all hands are up, he is at once declared a member, if not, the vote is reversed, any objector must state his objections in the presence of the church and applicant. If the objections are deemed sufficient for rejection, the applicant is rejected. If the objections are not sufficient, the matter is investigated and settled by the body. This is done so that no member can, by malice or prejudice, prevent any one else from becoming a member. Members are never received by a majority of the church, they require unity.

Members from other churches of the same faith are received by letter stating that the bearer is in fellow-

ship with the church granting the letter.

The third method, that of reconciliation, consists in restoring to the fellowship of the church members who had been excluded. When the church feels that an excluded member has fully repented of the sin for which he was excluded, he is restored to membership, if he desires restoration.

BAPTISM.

The word "*Baptist*" carries with it the idea of baptism, the word "*Baptism*" or "*Baptizo*" "to make whelmed," i. e., "fully wet," and this word is from the Greek verb "*Babto*" "to overwhelm," i. e. "to cover wholly with a fluid." I quote from Strong's Concordance and Greek Lexicon. The Baptists who compose Fisher's River Association fully believe and practice the above, their mode of baptism being that of immersion. In this body, or the church composing it, I believe that none practice administering the ordinance of Baptism except ordained Elders, and no per-

son is considered a fit subject for baptism except persons who have been regenerated and born of the Spirit of God.

Baptism is always public and generally on the Sabbath day, though there is no fixed rule as to the day of the week.

We had just previously noted that baptism was always by immersion and will now give the manner. When a person or persons are to be baptized a place is sought where the water is from two and one-half to three feet deep. When the time appointed arrives the congregation usually sings a hymn, joins in prayer; and then, the prayer being ended, the minister takes the candidate by the hand, leads him down into the water. The candidate then turns his face down the stream, crosses his hands upon his (By the use of the word "his," we do not mean that women are excluded from this rite.) breast and gives himself up into the hands of the minister. Then the minister puts one hand to the back of the neck or head, the other to the

hands of the candidate, and says, in substance, "In obedience to the command of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." We then plunge or dip the candidate under the water. The water entirely covers the candidate. They claim that nothing short of a burial in the water is baptism, and will often repeat, "Buried with him in baptism." All persons who become members are baptized by some ordained minister of the Primitive Baptist order, even if he has been immersed before by some other order.

COMMUNION.

Communion, or the Lord's Supper, consists of taking bread and wine. This, as all other of their rites, is public, and usually on Sunday, at the close of the worship, or after preaching. When the preaching service is ended, a recess of from thirty to forty-five minutes is given, during which time the deacons prepare a table with a little bread made of

flour and water (no leaven being used), and some wine. Seats are arranged in order, so that all the members of like faith may be seated. Members of other denominations or orders are not invited to commune with them. This is not because they have any hard feelings towards others, or do not believe that they are all unconverted, but because this is a communion with the Lord, by his command, and no person who is not in full church fellowship is allowed to partake with them; even their own members who are "under dealings," that is, stand charged with some disorder, though they have not been tried and adjudged guilty, must abstain from the communion until they are set in order by the charge being either removed or disproved, or he has been forgiven the offence.

When the members are all seated near the table they usually sing a hymn, then the minister takes the bread in his hand, asks the members to join in thanks and prayer. After a short prayer, he breaks the bread into small pieces, gives it to the dea-

con or deacons, who pass the bread around to each member who takes a piece and eats it in the most solemn and affective manner. During the time he is breaking the bread, and also while the deacons serve it, the minister discourses about the death or sufferings of the Savior for his people. After the bread is served, he takes the wine, and after a short prayer and thanksgiving, pours some of it into a goblet or small vessel, gives it to the deacon or deacons, who serve it. Then they sing a hymn and go out.

WASHING FEET.

The washing of each other's feet is practiced by most of the churches in this Association. It is claimed by them that, "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash each other's feet" is as much a command as is the command for baptism, or communion; and all agree that feet-washing should be practiced in the churches. But there are a few who believe that the command simply implies humility and

not in a literal act. So it is agreed that no test of fellowship shall be made either the one way or the other. All, who desire, can wash; those, who do not so desire, are at liberty to refrain from washing. This command is usually complied with at the close of communion services, and before the singing of the last or closing hymn. Basins and water are prepared, as well as long towels. After the taking of the wine, some one (usually the minister) takes off his coat and lays it aside. Then takes one of the towels, girds it about his body, pours water into a basin, and announces that if any one is willing, he will wash his feet. Some one then pulls off his shoes and socks, and the washing is begun. When he is through, the brother, whose feet he has washed, washes his, so that they "wash each other's feet. In like manner they wash in pairs until all who desire so to do have engaged in the act of washing feet. At a first thought of the matter, this seems quite simple, but to see the act is entirely different. In-

stead of mirth, it produces the opposite effect. The writer has often seen the tears drop from the eyes of the person doing the washing, and fall upon the foot or feet of the brother whose feet he is washing; and, during the while, many! yes, very many in the audience will be shedding tears. At the conclusion a hymn is sung and they go out without the benediction.

FAMILY WORSHIP.

Family worship is not obligatory upon the members of the church, some of them practice having family prayers, others do not; yet, all agree that it is a duty and profitable for the Christian.

FAITH.

The writer is unable to summon words to express the exact belief, as regards this subject, but it is agreed by all the ministers and members, so far as we know, that faith is the moving power of the Christian; and by it he is prompted to prayer and all other Christian exercises. They

believe that no person is able to "act faith," and thereby become a child of God; but that "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," that is, that no person, who has not been quickened by the Spirit of God, and made able to hear and understand his teachings, is moved by faith; but that sinners, who are quickened by the Spirit of God, are made to believe that God exists and is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him; and thus being moved by faith, they pray and God hears and grants their petition; that all persons who pray God for the pardon of their sins, receive pardon; that this faith prompts the preacher to his preaching, as well as the hearer to his hearing; that this faith is not obtained by the act of the creature, but is the gift of God.

HOPE.

They preach that after the poor sinner has been moved by faith and "shows his faith by his works," that he is enabled to rest in hope; that hope is not a mere supposition or

wish, but that it is composed of reliance and expectation; and that it cannot be obtained by human skill, but that it is the outgrowth of experience; that this experience is brought about by tribulations and sufferings; that when the sinner receives hope in Christ, that he no longer attempts to find rest in the works of the flesh, or in the works of righteousness, which he has done, but that he, by faith, sees the righteousness of Christ as having been wrought for him, and rests in the belief that Jesus loves, and has ever loved him; that he left the glorious courts of heaven, came to earth, was tempted, suffered, bled, and died for him; and that through his death he (the sinner) is saved from the condemnation and eternal banishment, which his sinful nature had justly merited, that he relies solely on the love, merit, and righteousness of Christ, and does not go about to establish his own; that though he is often tempted and does many things which he ought not to do, and even repents of; yet the grace of God is sufficient for him; and thus

he rests in hope.

CHARITY.

The belief of the Baptists of this Association as regards charity, is that charity is not an act, but a power or condition which prompts the individual, moved by it, to action; that Charity is love in its broadest sense; that persons may be prompted to give, even much or all of their time, or goods, and if the giving is not prompted by love (charity), it does not profit the giver; and that if the giver is prompted by charity (love), then he is profited by the giving, even more than the person to whom the gift was made; that "It is better to give than to receive." So their ministers are very delicate about receiving gifts from their brethren. The writer will, perhaps, not soon forget an incident which occurred at the Association held with the church at Rock House, October, 1901. It was then and there stated to the Association that Elder T. J. Lawson's son had been sick for some time, causing his father to lose much time

and incidentally to come to want. The statement had no sooner been made than the brethren began to take out their purses and hurry down the aisle to the clerk's desk, and there lay down their money for the use of the destitute elder. There seemed to be so much love manifested among the brotherhood, and the money came in so fast that the clerk (Elder A. M. Denny) arose from the desk and began to exclaim, saying, "No doubt many here will say that this is charity; this is not charity, but the fruits of charity. Charity is love," etc., etc. This, so far as we know, is the accepted belief as regards charity.



THE MINISTRY.

The Gospel Ministry has been much discussed among the Primitive Baptist of this Association. From the earliest history of the body there has been a confirmed prejudice against a salaried ministry, which, no doubt, is more or less due to the fact that one of the great points upon which the Baptist Church split, or divided, in 1835, was the raising of funds for the support of the ministry, both at home and abroad; the Missionary or Means Baptists dwelling at length on the duty of the Church to contribute to the temporal support of the ministry, while the Primitive or Anti-Means Baptists took a different view, contending that the God who called them would see them fed.

THE CALL.

This is a subject upon which all the ministry of this body fully agree, that the great essential preparation of a preacher is to be "Called of God." This call is manifested to the indi-

vidual by the Spirit of God impressing the subject with an obligation and impression to preach the word, or gospel; and when the individual resists such an impression, it increases rather than diminishes. Also, when any person is so called, not only he, but the church will feel his call and realize that he is profitable for the ministry, and will have a desire for him to be set apart to perform the ordinance of the gospel.

LICENSE.

When the church feels that one of its members is impressed to preach and the member himself evidences the same, he is usually invited to lead in prayer, and to talk before the church. After finding that he manifests some power in prayer and preaching, they usually give him a license to exercise. Some times the license is limited to the bounds of his home Association; and, some times, especially if he seems very gifted, he is fully liberated to preach wherever and whenever God may give him liberty.

ORDINATION.

After the church becomes thoroughly convinced that he is called of God and profitable for the ministry, a presbytery of elders is requested for the purpose of his ordination. This request is usually—though not necessarily—made to the Association, and that body selects the elders who are to compose the presbytery. When the presbytery meets, they choose one of their members to preside, and, also, appoint some one to serve as secretary. They also usually call in all the ordained elders and deacons present to act with the presbytery in the ordination. When the presbytery is organized, the candidate is given, by the church, into the hands of the presbytery, who proceeds to examine him as regards his belief in God, in his Son Jesus, and in his word, as recorded in the Holy Scriptures. If the presbytery is fully satisfied that the candidate is called and his views on the Scriptures are in accordance with the general tenor of the Scriptures, and that

he contributes all the praise and glory to God in the salvation of sinners, then the presbytery engages in prayer to God, (one of their ministers leading) during which time each member of the presbytery lays his hand on the candidate's head. After prayer is concluded, some member of the presbytery, usually the moderator or chairman, proceeds to charge the candidate with the responsibility now resting upon him; also admonishing him to faithfulness in the ministry, etc.

SUPPORT OF THE MINISTRY.

While the temporal support of the ministry has been much discussed among many people, and much effort has been made to raise funds for the ministry; yet this matter has never been one to burden or harass the laity of this Association, neither have the ministers of this body, or collection of churches, spent their time in trying to collect, or cause to be collected, money for the purpose of disseminating the gospel among the people. All the ministers of this

Association labor for the support of themselves and their families. They are industrious and economical; and, being so, provide for their own homes; and some of them are even able to help others. As there are quite a number of ministers in the Association the churches are supplied with pastors, and no one burdened much. It is considered, and often remarked, that the layman loses his time in attending the church meeting, the same as the pastor who serves him; and, while the minister travels more and goes oftener than the layman, he is always received and cared for, his horse fed, etc., free of cost. The writer never saw a public collection taken up among the Baptists of this Association, except once for an afflicted minister, the facts of which are given under the title of "Charity" in this little book. But, while they do not take up collections, yet the laymembers do some times give to the ministers; but it is done in such a way as to prevent any show or display. The ministers make no charge for marriages and funerals.

If anything is given then they accept it; if not, they do not grumble or complain. They claim to preach the gospel free of charge, for the gospel's sake; and often travel many miles to do so. They usually travel by private conveyance, riding or driving their own stock. Sometimes the minister travels on the train, then the laity usually pays his expenses and conveys him from place to place, when off the railroad. We have known the ministers to spend weeks and sometimes months in traveling from church to church, and preaching the gospel.

DEACONS.

The deacon is an officer in the church whose duty it is to look after the general conduct of the church and when any disorder is manifested in any of the members, or if any of the members become alienated from the church or each other, to make an effort to restore order or peace; and, if he fails to do so, he reports the same to the church. Also, he must look after the poor of the

church and see that the minister's needs are supplied, in addition to serving the bread and wine at the communion service. There are usually two deacons, some times three, to each church, who are chosen for their fitness for the place, the church itself making the choice. After the deacon is selected he is ordained by a presbytery the same as an elder. It is understood that no person can be a deacon unless he is temperate, grave, not a striker, that is, taking or hearing one side of the question and refusing the other; or cleaving to one brother and refusing the other; and his wife also must be a temperate, quiet woman, and not a brawler or disturber.



A SKETCH OF THE CHURCHS.

We will now give a short sketch of each church, under its own name. This sketch of the churches is based on the best information available to the writer; and while omissions or mistakes may occur, we have no intention whatever of giving any one church a better or fuller sketch than any other. We hope the reader will consider this and not censure the author.

DEEP CREEK.

The church at Deep Creek in Yadkin county, is the oldest in the Association, also one among the oldest, if not the oldest in this section of the State. This church was established sometime prior to 1778, as the minutes of their meetings and conferences show them to have been holding regular monthly conferences at that time, with Elder Joseph Murphy as their pastor. We do not know under whose care the church was organized, but, from the best informa-

tion obtainable, believe that Elder John Gano was the pioneer Baptist minister in this section. According to Benedict's "History of the Baptist," Elder Gano resided and preached in the Jersey settlement of North Carolina as early as 1758, gathering together the church of that section. This organization was soon "broken up" he says, "by the incursions of the Indians, and he returned to New Jersey, from whence he had removed hither." From the same author we learn that two young men by the name of Joseph and William Murphy were baptized by Elder Shubal Stearns and began to preach so young, that they were called "Murphy's boys." This Joseph Murphy was pastor of Deep Creek church in Yadkin county (then called Surry). Yadkin county was formed from a part of Surry county. In 1817, at the monthly meeting in February, Elder Joshua Carter was installed as pastor. The church had previously asked for ministerial help from Grassy Knob and Flat Rock churches, and in response Elders John Angel and

William Britain, from their respective churches, came to Deep Creek, and placed Elder Carter in care of said church. He served for several years and was succeeded by Elder James J. Speer, who served until his death, February 3, 1853. In May of the same year, Elder John Jones was made pastor and served until his death, in December of 1875. Soon after his death, Elder A. M. Denny was chosen pastor and is still in their service. This church has continued one steady course. It opposed the Mission system in its early history, and would not follow the other churches of the Yadkin Association in building up the Missionary cause with a Missionary fund. So she joined with other small churches, of her own faith, and became a component part of Fisher's River Association. Her number, while Elder Speer was her pastor, was 26; at present it is about 40.

FISHER'S RIVER.

This Church is one among the oldest in the Association. When, or

by whom it was organized, we have no way of knowing. But we find from the records, now in the hands of her clerk, that this church was holding regular monthly services and conferences as early as 1808. While the records have been carefully preserved, yet the fading of ink and the manner of keeping them make it impossible for us to ascertain the change of pastor, or who was pastor in the earlier history of the church. But we find that an Elder Washburn was pastor as early as 1825, and an Elder Potter in 1830. We also note that, in 1822, a new meetinghouse had been built on the Ararat River, and services were being held there under the watchcare of this church; and that, in 1824, this church had 74 members. In 1829 a delegation was sent by this body to each of the following churches, to-wit: State Line, Little Yadkin, Cool Spring, Ararat, Mitchell's River, Snow Creek, Cody's Creek, and Stuart's Creek. The best information we can get is, that the purpose of this move was to consider the sit-

uation as regards the "Mission System," and "Sunday Schools," which finally led to the holding of a convention at Cody's Creek, in 1832, to which this church sent Drury Hodges, Drury Kersy, and C. Howard, as delegates; and the name "Fisher's River" being given to the new Association is but a fitting memory of the active part she took in the constitution of the body.

This church has had several elders to serve her as pastor, whose names we do not recall; but Elder John Jones served her a long time; and more recently, she was served by Elder M. G. Harbour; and, at present, by Elder W. H. Atkinson. She has had no great revivals at any time, but a regular, quiet progress, and all the while trying to honor the God in whom she believes. Her present number is only 19 members.

ARARAT.

This church is located at present four miles west of Pilot Mountain, at a point known as Cedar Hill. It was constituted with about 25 or 30 mem-

bers, on the 12th day of September, 1822, by a presbytery of elders, to-wit: William Davis, Manan Hill, Thomas Oliphant, and John Wilson. Elder Oliphant was its first pastor, and served for a number of years, and was succeeded by Elder John Jones, who served from the time of his installment until his death in December of 1875. Elder Gabriel Denny was then chosen, and is their present pastor. This church has been a very prosperous one. We might truthfully say that the churches of Hogan's Creek and Union are both the outgrowth of this one. We will also state that Elders M. G. Harbour, G. Denny, A. M. Denny, R. R. Key, W. M. Stone, and the writer were all ordained while members of this body. At one time she had some trouble in regard to the question of correspondence with the Mountain Association. This, however, was soon settled, and love, peace, and fellowship has existed ever since. The present membership is about 65.

FRANKLIN.

This church is one of the original churches that went into the organization of the Association. We cannot get the date of its origin; but, according to its records, it was in conference in the date of 1824, on the 1st Saturday in February, with Elder P. B. Cockerham as their pastor. Elder Cockerham was one of the organizers of the Association. Since that time, Elders Elijah Ramey and T. J. Lawson each served a long while, and now Elder W. H. Atkinson is their pastor. Their present number is about 45 members.

ROUND PEAK.

This church is among the oldest in the Association, and is one of the original churches that went into the constitution of the Association. We have no record of the presbytery constituting the church; but, from the best information available, we believe it was organized under the care of Elder Silas Jones, who served it from the time of its organization,

which was about 1825. Elder Calvin Jones also served as pastor some years, and Elder Nathan Alberty quite a number of years. Elders John Vass, Eli Kane, Wesley Brindle, Wm. M. Stone, J. D. Draughn, and, we believe, Elder H. Cain, all served for a longer or shorter period of time. This church has never experienced any "great revival" (as some call it), but has pursued a continued course of such conduct as would prove to the world that she fully believed her Articles of Faith which—though worded differently—contained the same meaning as the Old London Confession of Faith. Their present membership is only about 13 members.

STATE ROAD.

This church is quite an old body, having organized (from the best information obtainable) about the date of 1830. Elder Pleasant Cockerham was its first pastor, and caused the house for worship to be erected. After the death of Elder Cockerham Elders T. J. Lawson, M. G. Harbour,

A. C. Woodruff, J. M. Wyatt, and others all served for a longer or shorter period of time. Their present pastor is Elder J. M. Royal. This church has never been a very strong body as to numbers. They had some severe troubles with their pastor (Elder Wyatt) at one time, the particulars of which the writer is not able to give. In this connection, we would say that but little care had been taken of records, and much of the desired information is unobtainable. Their membership, at present, is about 33 members.

SWAN CREEK.

This church was organized sometime prior to 1832, and was one of the churches that went into the organization of Fisher's River Association. At the beginning it was in Surry county (now Yadkin), near the town of Boonville (*we learn*), but we have none of its records or proceedings. It ceased to exist, as an organization, about the date of 1865, and most of its members joined at Deep Creek.

FLAT SHOALS.

This church is at present located in Stokes county, N. C., about four or five miles north west of Danberry. It was a part of the Association as early as 1848, with Landon H. Southern as a delegate, who afterward served the Association as clerk for a session or two. We do not know when or where it was first organized, but the first we know of it was at its present place of worship, with (as we believe) Elder Robert W. Hill as pastor. Elder A. Moran served a long while as her pastor, and now Elder W. H. Atkinson is serving her. She was granted a Letter of Dismission, about 1863; and, sometime afterward, joined Mayo Association.

ROCK SPRING.

This church is located near the junction of Mitchell and Yadkin rivers, and was organized in 1840. The presbytery was composed of Elders Robert Welbourn and Robert Pardue. We have not the number of members at the beginning; but,

from the best information we can obtain, the church was small from the beginning. At first this church belonged to Roaring River Association, and joined Fisher's River by letter. Elder Robert Welbourn served them as pastor for a period of thirty-two years and seven months. He was, as we believe, a good man, and the service faithfully performed. Elder W. J. Combs served them about one year, Elder M. G. Harbour about nine years, and Elder Wm. R. Welbourn (grandson of Elder Robert Welbourn), about six years, Elder Gabriel Denny about three years, Elder Russell Key two years, and Elder C. B. Denny about six years. While this church has never, at any time, experienced a great revival, yet it has for many years contained some very lovely members, who are exceeding firm in the faith. Perhaps its being so near the church of Mulberry caused its membership to be small, especially during recent years. Its present membership is small.

FLOWER GAP.

At a time unknown to the writer, the church at Round Peak set off an arm at a place in Carroll county, Va., known as Flower Gap, about two miles from the town of Lambsburg. This little vine, watered by grace, grew in numbers to about 25, when the ministers and messengers composing Fisher's River Association thought best to constitute them into a body. And, accordingly, they appointed a presbytery of elders, to-wit: John Jones and E. R. Canter who, on the 21st day of August, 1841, met with the arm; and, finding them sound in the faith and practice, proceeded to constitute them into a body known under the name of the church at Flower Gap. They chose as their pastor Elder Hugh Jones, who served them faithfully for a period of thirty-six years. During all this time they continued to prosper. We will also mention one of the deacons, F. M. McCraw, whose service was of much value, not only to the church, but also to the Association. Some-

time, about 1878 or 1880, they chose Elder C. Blackburn, who served them about six months. Elder A. M. Branscome served two years, and then they chose Elder J. M. Wyatt, who served about six years. Since that time their present faithful pastor, Elder J. D. Vass, has been serving them. When Zion Association was continued she became a component part of that body. Her present number is about 65 or 70 members.

FISHER'S GAP.

Far up in the mountains, near a small town or village, by the name of Roaring Gap, is a band of pilgrims known by the name of the church at Fisher's Gap. This church was constituted in 1844, by a presbytery of elders, chosen by Fisher's River Association, to-wit: Elders John Jones and E. Canter, who met with nine members, with Letters of Dismission from other churches; and, finding them orthodox, organized or constituted them into a body. They chose as their pastor Elder Elijah Ramey, who served them for a peri-

od of fourteen years. In 1858 they chose Elder T. J. Lawson as their pastor, who served them very faithfully for forty-two years, and died. We do not know who is his successor. The present membership is about 56 members.

TOM'S CREEK.

The church at Tom's Creek, located about eight miles north of Pilot Mountain, was at first an arm of the old church, originally called "Red Cabin," now "State Line." In August, 1856, it was constituted into a church, Elders James Hill, Daniel Connor, Claybourn Plaster, and Austin J. Cassell, serving as a presbytery. They at once elected Austin J. Cassell as their pastor, who served them faithfully until 1868. Elder Wm. Moran then served them one year and died. At his departure his son, Alexander Moran, became pastor, and served until 1884. Upon his moving to another county he resigned, and Elder H. Cain served them until 1899, when he resigned. Elder H. D. Mickey served two years; and,

upon his resignation, Elder G. O. Key was chosen and is their present pastor.

In the date of 1867, this body received more members than any church in the Association ever received during the same space of time, baptizing 67 members. The year previous 18 had been added, and the year following 13 were baptized. Ninety-eight members were received by this body in three years.

This church may well be called the mother of Volunteer, Rock House and Albion. There have been quite a number of Elders ordained here. Those now living and in the ministry are, H. Cain, Joseph Atkinson, and John Moran. While there has been some trouble in this body, it is now a warm and prosperous church, numbering about 75 members.

WHITE OAK SPRING.

On the 26th day of October, 1872, while Fisher's River Association was in conference at Fisher's Gap, a presbytery of elders was appointed to meet at White Oak Spring, about

two miles north east of Mt. Airy, and organize a church there if thought expedient. They met soon afterwards and constituted or organized a church there with a very few members. They chose Elder H. Cain as their pastor, who served them until they disbanded and joined other churches by letter. Half of the members joined the church at Stuart's Creek, and half joined at Tom's Creek. This disbanding occurred about the year 1890.

ELK SPUR.

The church at Elk Spur was constituted in December, 1873. The following elders, chosen by Fisher's River Association, serving as a presbytery, to-wit: Elders John Jones, Hugh Jones, and John Vass; and who called to their assistance, deacons F. M. McCraw, Henry Hawks, and Levi Edwards. There were only 11 members at the time the church was constituted. Watered by grace, fed by the word of God, and ministered to by Elder Hugh Jones until the Lord saw fit to call him home;

then by Elders John Vass, Eli Kane, and, at present, A. Gardner. They have slowly increased in numbers, until, at present, they number about 40 members.

There has been very little trouble in this body. And, though few in numbers, yet they are strong in faith, continually trusting that He who called will ever keep them.

This church was one of the number petitioning for a letter to join in the organization of Zion Association, and became a part of that body.

CODY'S CREEK.

About five or six miles south of Dobson (the county seat of Surry county) is the spot upon which stood the old church known as Cody's Creek. We have no way of knowing when or by whom it was constituted, but learn that it was one of the original churches that went into the constitution of the Association. The Association was organized at this church in 1832. In 1848 we find that Elder Nathan Alberty was a delegate from that church to the

Association; and learn that he served that church as pastor from 1849 until his death, or nearly a half century. In his old age the membership grew very small by reason of death and other causes; and, about the date of 1895, Elders M. G. Harbour and G. Denny, serving as a presbytery, dissolved the church, by giving each of the members a letter of dismissal. Most of the members joined the church at Liberty.

SENER—LIBERTY.

A church by the name of Sener was organized about five miles south west of Dobson, on the 13th day of March, 1879. Thirteen members bearing letters of dismissal from other churches of the same faith met with Elders B. E. Caudle, Wm. Lundy, A. J. Taylor, J. D. Draughn, and A. C. Woodruff, who, acting as a presbytery, after examination, found them in order and constituted them into a church. At first this church was a part of the Mountain Association, but afterward joined Fisher's River by letter. They chose Elder

Draughn as their pastor, and he served them until 1888, when they decided to move their place of worship to Liberty, at which place Elder G. Denny had been serving for some-time. (Elder Draughn ceasing to serve.) Elder Denny continued to serve them (both bodies uniting under the name of Liberty). Elder Denny served, in all, twenty-six years, after which Elder Harbour became pastor. This body is quite a lovely band of christians, numbering 34 members.

ZION HILL.

The church at Zion Hill is located about twelve miles north-west of Mt. Airy, N. C. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July, 1878, Elders Wm. Lundy, Isaac Webb, B. E. Caudle, and J. D. Draughn, serving as a presbytery, met with 20 members, bearing letters from Crooked Creek and Good Hope—both of these churches then belonged to the Mountain Association—at the above-named place; and, on due examination finding them orthodox, constituted them

into a church. They chose Elder Wm. Lundy as their first pastor. This church joined the Mountain Association; but, in 1891, joined Fisher's River Association by letter from the Mountain. Elder Lundy served them nine years, at the end of which time they chose Elder D. S. Webb, of New River Association, who served them one year. Then, for a while, they were deprived of a pastor. In 1893 they elected their present pastor, Elder J. D. Vass. This church has had no great revivals, and no divisions. They joined the new (Zion) Association at the time of its organization. Their present number is about 30.

MULBERRY.

About ten or twelve miles south west of Dobson, which town is the county seat of Surry county, the above-named church is located. On the 27th day of July, 1881, Elder Wm. Lundy, of the Mountain Association, and Elders J. D. Draughn, T. J. Lawson, and A. C. Woodruff, of Fisher's River Association, met

with 23 members, bearing letters of dismission from other churches of the same faith; and, finding them sound in the faith, constituted them into a body. They adopted the Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum in common use among Primitive Baptists, and chose Elder J. D. Draughn as their pastor, who served them seven years. Elder W. R. Welbourn served them two years, Elder T. J. Lawson one year, and Elder C. B. Denny has been serving them ever since 1894. This church has never had any great revivals in it, yet there has been occasional accessions and a few exclusions. This body contains some very able and highly esteemed members. Their number at present is about 25.

HOGAN'S CREEK.

The church at Hogan's Creek is located about three miles from Si-loam depot in Surry county. It was first an arm of the church at Ararat, but soon received several members by experience and baptism, and the mother church granted letters of dis-

mission to the members constituting the arm;* and, in the date of 1885, the Association appointed a presbytery of elders, to-wit: Gabriel Denny, A. M. Denny, and Nathan Alberty, who met with the said members, 23 in number, and, finding them sound in the faith (or orthodox), constituted or organized them into a church under the above name. They at once chose Elder M. G. Harbour (one of their number) as their moderator, who has served them quite faithfully ever since. This church has for the most of the time been prosperous. At one time it numbered more than 60 members, but quite a number took letters with which they joined in the constitution of the church at Union, it being an arm of that body. The church now numbers about 30 members.

*An arm of a church, as understood by the Primitive Baptists of this Association, is a body of members set off from the main church with authority to receive members, but not having authority to transact any other business. They do not represent themselves in Associations, except through the main body or church to which they belong.

UNION.

The church at Union was organized in May, 1888. Elder D. S. Webb, of New River Association, made several successive appointments, and preached with much power in a community about six or eight miles east of Dobson, Surry county, N. C. The word, effective in power, was heard with much joy, and many came home to their friends, bearing the glad tidings of salvation and 16 were baptized at one time. On Saturday, April 21, 1888, the Association being in conference with the church at Rock Spring, in Surry county, N. C., granting the request of the church at Hogan's Creek, appointed a presbytery of elders to attend the church or arm of Hogan's Creek, at Union, in the community above named, and constitute or organize them into a body or church.

The presbytery, to-wit: A. M. Denny, G. Denny, Nathan Alberty, and J. D. Draughn, met 45 members with letters of dismission from other churches, and, finding them ortho-

dox in faith, constituted them into a church and ordained John G. Jones, A. Z. M. Denny, and King D. Key as deacons, in said church. The church chose Elder M. G. Harbour for their moderator, and under whose watchful care the church has continued to prosper. About 60 members is the present number in fellowship. Two elders, to-wit: G. O. Key and W. H. Atkinson have been ordained to officiate in the gospel ministry, one of which is still a member of that body, the other (Elder Key) has removed to Pilot Mountain. Several members have been granted letters and joined at other places. There has been very little trouble in this body, and not a church in the bounds of the Association stands fairer as a light to those who may behold her.

ROCK HOUSE.

The church at Rock House was an arm set off by the church at Tom's Creek. For several years it was only a part of that body, but opened a door and received members. In April, 1889, the Association, in con-

ference with the church at Union, appointed a presbytery of elders to attend the arm and constitute them into a church if found orthodox. On the 22nd day of June, 1889, there met with the members, composing the arm, Elders H. Cain and G. Denny, whom the Association had appointed. They called to their assistance Deacon Wm. Southern. After due examination, they found the arm an orthodox body and constituted them into a church. They chose Elder H. Cain as their pastor. He served them three years, at the end of which time he resigned. They then chose Elder W. H. Atkinson who served them until 1903. They then chose Elder G. O. Key who served them one year. Again they called Elder W. H. Atkinson. With 10 members at the beginning they have been prospered until at present their number is about 48.

DOVER.

Near the village of White Plains is a church by the above name. At the spring session of the Fisher's

River Association, the church at Stuart's Creek sent a request for a presbytery to organize a church at the above-named place. The Association appointed Elders M. G. Harbour, A. C. Woodruff, C. Blackburn, and W. H. Atkinson, who met with Elder F. J. Stone and several deacons, who also served with the appointees on the 5th day of August, 1893, as a presbytery for the organization of Dover Church. Fifteen members presented letters from other churches of the same faith (mostly from Stuart's Creek); and, after examination, being found sound in the faith, were declared a church by the presbytery. They chose Elder J. D. Draughn as their pastor, who has served them ever since. Their present number is about 15. Letters of dismissal have been granted to 7.

MARTIN.

On the top of the Blue Ridge mountain, near where the Volunteer Road crosses the mountain, is situated a little church by the name of Martin. This body was organized

on the 29th day of November, 1875, Elders M. G. Harbour and J. M. Wyatt, with Deacons A. Webb, J. W. Strickland, S. B. Bowman, and J. J. Ayers serving as a presbytery. Only six members at first composed this church. Their first pastor was Elder A. Gardner, who served four years. Elder A. Z. Phillips served one year, after which their present pastor, Elder Isaac Webb, accepted the care of the church and has been serving ever since. Their number is about 25 or 30 members.

ALBION.

Among the foothills of the Chestnut Ridge mountains, four miles north of Westfield, is an old graveyard, for many years a burial ground of the Jessup family. So for many years, it carried the name of the "Jessup Grave-yard." In 1898, the author of this work began to preach there. There seemed to be so much interest manifested that, by request of the church at Tom's Creek, a door was opened for the reception of members. Some joined, and more inter-

est was manifested; and, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1899, the church at Tom's Creek called for or requested a presbytery to meet there for the purpose of constituting a church, if found orthodox.

On the 8th day of July, 1899, Elders H. Cain, G. O. Key, H. D. Mickey, and J. A. Ashborn and Deacons O. J. Denny and H. C. Booker, met with 14 members, bearing letters of dismission from Tom's Creek and State Line churches. They constituted them into a body, which adopted the name of "Albion," from the white land on which the meeting was held. It was a meeting long to be remembered, though held out of doors under an old oak tree.

They adopted the Rules of Decorum, Articles of Faith and Covenant in general use by Primitive Baptists. They chose the author of this book to serve them as pastor. Their present number is about 40 members.

MOUNTAIN VIEW.

This church, located near the foot of the Blue Ridge mountain, near the Volunteer Gap, was organized on the 30th day of March, 1895. Elders M. G. Harbour and A. Gardner, with Deacons H. C. Booker, J. C. McCraw and J. W. Strickland, serving as a presbytery. There were 14 members at first, and they chose Elder A. Gardner as their pastor, who served them until very recently, when Elder Garland Allen accepted their call, and is now their pastor. The church is yet small, with about the same number with which it organized.

PILOT MOUNTAIN.

The church at Pilot Mountain was constituted on the 2nd day of December, 1896.

A presbytery of elders, C. B. Denny, H. Cain, and others, was appointed by the Association when convened with the church at Volunteer, in October, 1896. Elders Cain and Denny were present with the

arm of Ararat church, at Pilot Mountain, December 2, 1896. Elder Elijah M. Barnard, of Mayo Association, being present, was requested and took part with them. Deacon P. W. Lawrence also was chosen as a member of the presbytery.

Twelve members with letters or certificates of membership from Ararat, Union, and Tom's Creek churches came forward; and, being found orthodox, were constituted into a church under the name of the church at Pilot Mountain. They chose Elder E. M. Barnard as pastor, but the distance being so great, and his time so filled in attending other churches, he could not serve. They then chose their present pastor, Elder G. O. Key. They also agreed upon Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum, almost verbatim with those laid down in Hassell's Church History. Their present number is about 50.

Elders O. J. Denny and C. F. Denny, the former now residing in Randolph county, N. C., and the latter in Greensboro, N. C., were ordained here on about December 26, 1804.

STUART'S CREEK.

This church is a very old body, but just when it was organized we have no way of knowing. The earliest account we can get is the date of the deed to the plot of land on which the house stands. This was (as we learn) executed in 1794. We learn that the first church book was burned in the home of one brother Moss some forty or fifty years ago. About or before which time Elder John Jones became its pastor and served it a long while. At his death Elder A. M. Denny became its pastor and served two years. Elders John Vass and J. D. Draughn served one year, then Elders Isaac Webb and J. D. Draughn two years, Elder D. S. Webb one year, Elder C. B. Denny some years, and now Elder G. O. Key is its pastor. It was this church of which H. C. Booker, "the sweet singer," was a member. Its present number is about 70 members.

VOLUNTEER.

This church is located about three

miles south east of Pilot Mountain. At first this church was an arm set off by Tom's Creek Church. On the 16th day of November, 1867, Elders John Jones, Wm. Moran, Alex. Moran, Hugh Jones, and Nathan Alberty, under appointment by the Association, met with 22 members at the above-named place, all bearing letters from the church at Tom's Creek; and, finding them orthodox, constituted them into a church. They chose Elder Wm. Moran as their pastor, who served them until his death. Elder Alex. Moran, his son, was his successor, serving them several years. Elders H. Cain, C. B. Denny, and others, for a longer or shorter period of time. At one time the church got in bad shape, owing to the nonfellowship existing among several of the members. After the difficulties were settled and fellowship restored, they chose Elder G. Denny, in April, of 1888, who served them about four years, and resigned; on his resignation, in March, 1895, they chose Elder W. M. Stone, their present pastor. Elders H. D. Mickey and J. L. Pyr-

tle were ordained at this church.

Their present number is about 42.

CERTIFICATE OF PRESBYTERS.

STOKES COUNTY, N. C.,

November 16, 1867.

We, the undersigned presbytery, this day met at Volunteer meetinghouse, an arm of Tom's Creek, according to request of said church, and went into the examination of the orthodoxy of said arm; and, believing it to be orthodox in the faith, constituted it as a church of the Primitive Baptist faith, to exercise all the privileges of the gospel; also, we went into the examination of the two brethren, James George and P. W. Lawrence, and believing they were orthodox in the faith, set them apart to all the duties assigned them as deacons for said church.

Signed by us, the presbytery,

JOHN JONES.

WM. MORAN.

ALEX. MORAN.

HUGH JONES.

NATHAN ALBERTY.

CONCLUSION.

In the last chapter of this little book we will note some of the characteristics of the Primitive Baptists in the mountains, more closely than has been done elsewhere in this work.

We will first note some of their customs in the management of their church matters, which are by no means fixed laws among them.

First, all through this work will be noticed the fact that most of the presbyteries are appointed by the Association, yet there is no such a law. Why is this? Is it because they claim the Association higher authority than the church? By no means. The church is the *highest* authority; and the Association is only a union of the churches composing it, and claims no power over any of the churches (see Constitution). We would ask why, then, is the appointment made by the Association? It is because of the great desire to preserve perfect unity. The church desiring a presbytery asks the Association, where

all the elders can be together and arrange the matter to their best convenience, and choose those who will best suit for the purpose. Then the Association simply requests the elders chosen to attend the request of the church; and, for the instruction of all, they report what they do back to the Association. But someone will ask, Are no presbyteries obtained without the help or consent of the Association? Yes; it is sometimes necessary to have a presbytery sooner than one could be obtained from the Association. In that case the church, so desiring, applies to a sister church, or to some elder or elders to give the desired aid, and they comply with the request.

A presbytery is usually composed of two or more ordained elders. Ordained deacons also serve on presbyteries, but it is not customary or considered orthodox for a presbytery to be wholly composed of deacons. The work done by presbyteries is ordination of elders and deacons,—there is no such title as "*Bishop*" used among them, though it is usually under-

stood that all elders have a right to the title of "bishop"—constituting or organizing churches, and, in case a church gets too weak to exist longer as a body, a presbytery is necessary to dissolve it and grant letters of dismission to its members.

While the church is considered the highest body, and no ecclesiastical power over it, yet no church is supposed to have the right to withdraw from the Association without the consent of the Association. If a church wishes to join another Association, it gets a letter of dismission from the Association of which it is a part, just as a member of a church who wishes to join at some other place; and, in like manner, no member of a church has a right to go to some other place and become a member there, without a letter of dismission from his home church. One might ask, Why do they require a letter of dismission? It is plain that if going at random was tolerated that persons or members who become a little dissatisfied at some action of the church or Association, might

leave because of the dissatisfaction, and thereby the fellowship or unity of the church would suffer. But if the party or parties, wishing to move, obtain a letter, the letter itself states that fellowship exists, and no one is hurt by the move.

We will also note the fact that the Primitive Baptists do not have very long, or protracted meetings. This is not because they do not like to meet together and stay together a long while, for they love each other very much and often make sacrifices simply to be in each other's company; but the reason is because, at those long meetings or protracted meetings, lasting several days, there usually gets up more or less excitement; and they claim that persons may get excited, in this way, and mistake the excitement for a change of heart, thus being deceived. They claim that excitement is no part of the Christian Religion, and should be guarded against. While it is true that they do not have long or protracted meetings, yet, when their Associations convene, they have very

large congregations, most generally from two to five thousand people assemble at the place of holding the Association. Almost every body, near enough, "take company," that is, they open their doors and invite the people to their homes, and entertain them free of charge during the session of the Association. Usually on the last day of the Association, and sometimes on each day, dinner is carried to the church and served. Some have come long distances and must return, so this is necessary to prevent hunger.

If a member is able to entertain his brethren in this way and refuses, which they seldom do, he is dealt with for covetousness, just as for any other sin. As a rule they are very hospitable, and no pains are spared in providing the best they can get for their guests.

At these Associations three delegates from each church are expected; correspondents from all neighboring Associations of the same faith, together with elders from a distance, and all others who may wish to

come and visit the Association or hear the preaching.

It also seems to be well understood that no confederation of members or churches for the purpose of effecting changes or reforms is tolerated. If a change is desired it should be worked for in the body as a whole, whether in church or association; and if by reasoning the matter calmly the entire body is consensive, no one is hurt or wounded in feelings; but if a portion confederate themselves together to oppress or suppress others, even though the confederating party or parties should succeed in obtaining a majority, then those who were suppressed would be wounded, and true fellowship could not exist. This, however, should not be understood to prohibit brethren, be they few or many, from discussing privately or publicly existing evils or needed reforms.

FREEDOM.

It is claimed by all Primitive Baptists, so far as we know, that until a person is converted to Christ, or in

Christ, that such person is in bondage to sin; that sin is reigning (ruling) over him; and in such condition he cannot feel entirely free, no matter what the environments may be. But, as it is understood by the church, he has a master (sin) whom he is serving continually; and that, though while in nature's night, or unquickened, he is hardly conscious of it. Yet it is, all the same, true; and when quickened, he realizes his bondage and attempts to get out, but finds that it takes the prevailing grace of God, manifested to him individually, to bring about true freedom. Hence, "If the Son make you free, ye shall be free in deed." Thus realizing that freedom is bought with the precious blood of a crucified Redeemer, they hold freedom and liberty as the great treasure here and are not ready to become entangled with bondage.

They are careful not to join secret orders of any kind, as there appears to be some "*secret*" or "*hidden*" thing that they are not allowed to divulge; and, hence, the tendency to bondage. They claim that secret orders are

dangerous to both church and State, and should not be tolerated. They often call them the "hidden work of darkness." They oppose all oppressive laws; very few of them favor "Prohibition" simply as a legal statute, but they hold that if any "Prohibition" is effective, it must be wrought in the heart, and, once wrought there, is effective, indeed. Yet some favor legal "Prohibition."

INDUSTRY.

As a rule Primitive Baptists are very industrious, and very few of them fail to own little homes, as is stated somewhere else in this little book. But desiring to continue in the "old paths," very few of them launch out into the field of the inventive genius or take great risks in trying "something new." They eye new things with suspicion, until fully tried. So, with the shifting of commercial interests, the seeming uncertainty of trade and manufacture, cause most of them to choose to be farmers, do their own work, eat their own raising of meat and bread,

feed their own herds and use their milk and butter. This, also, tends, they say, to keep them freer and happier than they could be if otherwise engaged. You seldom or never see them in the market places or places of amusement, engaged at Checkers, Cards, Dice, or other games of amusement.

While few of them are "Prohibitionists," yet drunkenness is looked upon as a very grave offense and is not tolerated. Virtue is a trait of character without which no one can be a Primitive Baptist, indeed. So it goes without saying that they are chaste, keepers at home, etc., etc.

While very few of them have become scholars, in the true sense of the word, yet this is not due to the fact that they desire to put a premium on ignorance, but to the fact that up until quite recently they have not had access to good schools within their reach.

Remarks having often been made relative to the great number of preachers in this Association, calls upon us to say that it is true that

this Association has been blessed with quite a number of worthy ministers; and, while this is true, it is also true that there has been some unfaithfulness on the part of those liberated to preach, as well as on the part of those liberating them, often being prompted by a spirit of kindness and love, not with an intent to injure the cause or the brethren.

In conclusion let us say that, when we reflect on the history of this little body of worshipers, of their faith, devotion, love, virtue, as well as their troubles, trials, doubts, and fears, it calls to our mind the following little poem:

Where shall a weary sinner go
To soothe his sinful mind?
What creature can conceive his woe,
Save one of his own kind?

His eyes ascending up to God,
The Holy, Wise and Just;
He sees a doom to be deplored,
And meet that doom he must.

There is no hope in justice, stern
For him such fate to shun;
A God of mercy he must learn,
And to his presence run.

But justice must be satisfied,
In the great Court above,
Before such mercy is applied,
In power, and truth, and love.

Jesus, the Son of God, and man;
As God his sin doth see;
As man, before his Judge doth stand,
To set the sinner free.

Justice he sees fulfilled complete,
Since Christ has shed his blood;
And glory crowns the mercy seat,
For he's at peace with God.

THE END.



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NOTICE TO THE READER

While the author and committee have used due diligence to ascertain the correctness of every expression in this work, still it is possible that errors may exist. Any person, therefore, finding such errors will do us a favor by notifying us, so that, in case a second edition should be printed, such errors may be corrected.

JESSE A. ASHBURN,
Pilot Mountain, N.C.

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